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PROGRESSIVE LABOR

Volume 9, Number 6 April-May 1975

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The latest "Cultural Revolution" was more a charade to insure the right wing's power than a serious political effort for socialist development. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." The main enemies of the Chinese workers who were removed from leadership in the original Cultural Revolution are now back in power except old Liu. The only reason he's still out in the cold is either because he is dead, or because Mao and his wife still have it in for Liu and his wife, both of whom were claimed then, to have fancy clothes.

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Sharpening world contradictions, especially between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are intensifying. This is more evident as the U.S. economy sinks and the Soviet economy surpasses it. Both imperialist monsters are heading for a showdown. War and fascism are the inescapable consequences of the decline of U.S. imperialism. Only a communist-led working class can curb and crush fascism and turn imperialist war into civil war, i.e., revolution. The class struggle rages and the working class and its allies can only win with the goal of political power, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This means armed struggle. The current stage of the class struggle is creating the possibility for the seizure of power. Taking power in the unions today around advanced positions will build the strength of the working class by strengthening the unions. And, above all, building the revolutionary instrument, the PLP, is the prime aim of all advanced workers.

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This article will become especially meaningful as U.S. bosses enlarge their war machine to guarantee its profits. Already they are planning to move into the Mideast for oil. Everyone knows that grabbing Arab oil is not in the interest of the workers, but is in the interest of big oil companies who see their profits slipping away. Army work, sooner or later means turning the guns on the Generals and those bosses who need the Army to make super profits.

Next Issue:

Articles on National Health Bills, Revolutionaries in Ceylon, and more.

PL

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To Contact PLP:

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Little Rock: Box 132, Little Rock, Ark. 72203

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Los Angeles: P.O. Box 91494, Los Angeles, Calif. 90009; **San Diego:** Box 14103, San Diego, Calif. 92114; **San Francisco:** Box 562, San Francisco, Calif. 94101.

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WASHINGTON
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LETTERS

On Religion

Dear PL Magazine,

When the last issue of **PL Magazine** came out (Vol. 9, No. 5), December 12, 1974, I was very excited to see as one of the articles, "Religion: Bosses' Weapon." At a time when religion is getting new life put into it by the ruling class, a communist analysis would be very welcome. However, after reading the article I was extremely disappointed. Nowhere was there a clear discussion of religion, "mainstream" or otherwise. Just pages of ultra-sectarian name calling. There was no way in which I could have used that article in discussions with honest students who have been caught up in Yoga, "Lord of the Rings" or parapsychology. I don't really care about the Children of God, or Hari Krishna nuts, they are long out of touch with reality. However, many students are involved with either "mainstream" religion or the mild forms of "new" mysticism, such as Yoga, or ESP. These are students who are active in campus struggles against racism and budget cutbacks, and are not simply chanting idiots.

I would like to compare the "Religion" article with the articles on Solzhenitsyn and the Spanish Civil War. Both these articles attacked revisionists and other class enemies very strongly. However, they both included a lot of analysis to back up the attacks and nasty names.

One of the reasons I'm writing this letter is that a number of friends of the Party, here at Stony Brook, expressed the same views to me, when I asked them their opinions of the magazine.

Comradely,
A PL member, Stony Brook, N.Y.

Dear PL Magazine:

I read the last issue, and I liked it a great deal. I was able to use the article on religion a great deal at work to expose a John Birch steward who belongs to the Worldwide Church, and is a member of the Evangelists underground, a rabid anti-communist outfit.

In showing the article I ran into some snags. The snags were that the folks I showed the article to were religious in the sense that they were seeking out alternatives to the capitalist system. They found the article helpful, but did not like the swearing. I too did not like it, although I told them that this was small compared to the might of the content of the article. They agreed.

Thus I thought I'd write a bit on swearing, as a result of the conversation. I am an ex-marine, and so is one of my co-workers who read it, and who **was** involved in religion.

In boot camp they taught us to swear a great deal. Today sometimes I swear too much. When I swear it means that I am not thinking, or that my chain of thought becomes weak.

I don't think we want to do that. I want to conserve my class hatred, and use it well, and I felt a lot of people who read the article would have been more friendly if they had seen the writer as a person who hated the enemy enough to save it for the struggle.

—Comradely, B.B.
Norwich, Conn.

Maoism in Decline

Dear PL Magazine:

Maoism has never been a trend in the U.S. working class and is decomposing into sects of squabbling dropout intellectuals. Some of the leaders are graduates of the right-wing of SDS: Mike Klonsky runs the October League (OL), Bob Avakian, son of an Oakland judge, the Revolutionary Union (RU) and Juan Gonzalez, the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers' Organization (PRRWO, formerly the Young Lords). They had swarmed around SDS 5 years ago to form a right-wing to stop the PL influenced Worker-Student Alliance. They waved redbooks, claimed they had a hotline to Peking, and ran at the sight of campus struggle. They organized nothing and left SDS when they couldn't expel PL.

Another leading Maoist, James Foreman, formerly of the Black Workers' Congress (BWC), was the SNCC leader who hustled contributions at suburban cocktail parties while field secretaries were shot, bombed and jailed in the south. Then Foreman tried milking churches for "reparations" to his business enterprises. Newark's Baraka and his Congress of Afrikan People claim to be Maoist also. Baraka won his ruling class merit award for trying to sell Mayor Gibson to radicals. Other Maoists include I Wor Kuen in S.F. Chinatown, April 23rd Movement (ATM) in LA. Chicano barrio, the Communist League (CL), an old CP splitoff that pushes Black Belt nationalism, and assorted other student - dominated collectives near universities.

The RU attempted to unite the rightwing of SDS, but was rejected by Mark Rudd and his Weathermen, Klonsky, and later Bruce Franklin and his Stanford-based Venceremos. This latter group of frantic paranoids fell apart (probably when their government subsidies were cut off), but some members along with a snitch named DeFreeze formed the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA). The RU then tried merging with the PRRWO

Letters...

and the BWC to form a unified party, the professed goal of all Maoists. However, these egotists fell out and attacked each other and shortly afterward the few blacks in the RU split off and attacked the RU.

So the RU switched to open racism; in Boston they support the racist school boycott (see their paper, **Revolution,** Oct. and Nov. 1974). One of their pathetic rationales is that some non-racist whites hate bussing. Another is that "narrow nationalism," not racism, is the main danger communists face. Real communists however welcome integrated schools as a way to unify the struggle for better schools and for socialism. Communists see racism as the bosses' main weapon to weaken us and nationalism of all kinds as a scheme to divide and weaken a working class which is **inter**national. The future of groups like the RU is white nationalism, something like Mussolini who spoke socialism but pushed national chauvinism. Closer to home were the Join-Young Patriots group of Chicago poor whites who claimed to be militant leftists but organized for white power. This goes hand-in-hand with the nationalism and exclusivism of Maoists in minority communities, who try to prevent working people of all backgrounds from uniting to kill racism and capitalism.

The RU's blatant racism scares the hell out of the other Maoists because it threatens their own subtler type, much the same as the Workers' League gives ulcers to other Trotskyites. As the other Maoists denounced the RU, the RU responded with a limp band of hippies to wreck the Guardian offices in N.Y.C. (a Maoist paper allied with the OL), but couldn't get up the elevator which kept sinking.

This low level farce reflects the extremely limited influence of Maoism. The local Maoists originally saw themselves as representatives of a new China-based international. Mao and Chou have recently moved so far to the right that Maoists feature less and less China news—they'd have a hard time justifying Marcos' (fascist dictator of the Philippines) recent visit to China or their incredibly rapid recognition of Chilean dictator Pinochet. China prefers dealing with Kissinger or Henry Jackson or David Rockefeller. Further, they seem to approve of the national U.S.-China Friendship Association, which is not involved in U.S. politics and gives the Chinese rulers a more stable and coherent vehicle to push their revisionism than do the Maoists.

Many foreign students who admire China's peasant-dominated revolution have broken with China's politics since Mao and Chou began openly cavorting with such fascists as the Shah, Bhutto, Haile Selaissie and Marcos. New Maoist recruits usually are student dropouts in communes who are reading Mao this month after finishing Freud, Friedan or Fanon. Once recruited, many are sent to industrial centers to make deals with opportunist labor leaders, hoping to appear to have a working-class base. They have never clearly rejected drugs, and in fact they give pot parties to attract young people.

But they are years behind the Communist Party (CP) in organizing for sellouts. In fact, they tend to praise CP fronts like the recent Puerto Rican National Day Rally in N.Y. The main speakers—Juan Mari Bras, a CP ally, and CPer Angela Davis—were not criticized by Maoist papers. The entire rally was praised, and the fact that no one mentioned working-class dictatorship as the only way to real Puerto Rican independence was consciously ignored.

These pipsqueaks have gotten nowhere in their bid to derail the working class movement, and thus resort to nationalist-racist backbiting against each other and raids against each others' turf. The final and ultimate epithet hurled at rival groups is that they are just like PL. We should be honored to be slandered by such low-lifes. Their teeth rattle and they piss in their pants as PL continues building and consolidating its industrial working-class base. The Maoists, like the Trots, CP, liberals and all running dogs, will have their asses set on fire by the working class.

—An enthusiastic reader
Washington, D.C.

Editorship Usurped?

To the editor:

It was with increasing astonishment and dismay that I read the article "Solzhenitsyn Slanders the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" in the November 1974 PL.

At first I thought the magazine had reprinted a review from the Albanian press, for some bizarre reason explainable only by the twisted humor of the editors. But then I realized the author was writing in PL's name.

For the writer not to grasp the policy of the party is unfortunate but understandable. That's why we have editors. But when the editors don't know the policy we have a calamity on our hands.

Can it be that PL's editors don't know or can't tell the difference between the Albanian and Chinese line about "modern revisionists usurping the Soviet leadership" and Road to Revolution III? RR III holds that the Stalin leadership's wrong policies (e.g. promoting professionalism over communist consciousness; combatting egalitarianism and creating instead a status- and privilege-ridden society; identifying nationalism as communism; withholding democracy from the working people because it believed the majority of the Soviet working people—the farmers—were by their immutable class nature anti-socialist and so unreachable through ideological struggle) created a new, exploitative ruling class.

One will hate Solzhenitsyn all the more if he is criticized from PL's real position.

RR III holds that the communist movement as a whole ceased being revolutionary in fact by the end of the 1920s and in word by the

mid-1930s. Communist parties which tried to carry out revolutionary siezures of power did so in opposition to the policy of the Soviet party and of the international communist movement. When these parties went on to construct new societies with their newly-won power they all adopted Soviet policies. These policies seemed successful. But by following these policies they quickly wiped out whatever advances toward communist society their revolutionary struggles for power had achieved.

As it is inconceivable that the editors confused Chou En-lai's line with the conclusions of the PL membership, I came to see that the editors are a renegade revisionist clique who have usurped the editorship! Get them to a May 7 Cadre School so they can study an illustrated edition of RR III!

The article itself is a disaster, because it is based on and tries to justify the neat little fairy tale about "usurpation." If only life were so simple to grapple with as that wolves-in-sheep's-clothing story would have us believe.

Aside from its falsity, one problem with the fairy tale is that it is useful only as an alibi for the disasters you are presently enduring; it doesn't help you avoid anything:

**Khrushchev was the usurper. But Khrushchev was also chief political officer at the battle of Stalingrad. Our author tells us that "what defeated the Nazis (at Stalingrad) was the tremendous spirit and self-sacrifice of the Red Army." (p. 65) Developing that "tremendous spirit" was Khrushchev's specific assignment. So which is the real Khrushchev? How come the bad Khrushchev became prime minister and not the good Khrushchev?

**Malenkov was a "groveling sycophant" and not a real revolutionary. But Malenkov was Stalin's most trusted aide for 15 years. Stalin gave him one important assignment after another. He became the leader at Stalin's death and it was from him that Khrushchev usurped the power. If Stalin couldn't figure out Malenkov's true nature who could—ever? Unless, of course, Stalin was also rotten, or a boob (not merely mistaken, since we are dealing here with traitors).

But Stalin was neither rotten nor a boob. Stalin was the leader who understood the lessons of Bolshevik success and originated the idea—a startling idea wholly breaking with the traditional conclusions of 25 years of left-wing analysis, and substituting a new strategic approach—socialism in one country. It was as important an achievement as Lenin's earlier strategic developments. Stalin formulated a set of policies to reach his goal and, against all odds, inspired the world's working people to realize those policies. That is why he was a great leader. When those policies triumphed it turned out they did not achieve what it was thought they would. They were based on the wrong sociology and achieved the wrong result. This was Stalin's tragedy, and while it should not obscure his contribution or cause us to abandon it, there have been vast, tragic results from his failure. (Stalin's enemies, however, whether Trotsky or Churchill, didn't fight his policies because they felt they would fall short of achieving socialism. They fought him because they opposed his goals, but Trotsky, in particular, shared his sociology.)

Interestingly our author arrives at the same conclusion, equally false, as Solzhenitsyn and his friends do about the NKVD. For our author the NKVD (and its predecessors and successors) was the mechanism that defeated the revolution's enemies. Solzhenitsyn puts it a little differently: the NKVD kept the population loyal.

The truth is the Soviet workers defeated the revolution's enemies. They believed in Stalin's and the Communist Party's goals and believed Stalin's policies would achieve those goals. That is why they were vigilant, supported the purges, worked hard, and fought hard in the world war. No compulsion save the compulsion of agreement could send men onto the battlefield shouting "For Stalin!" (which—melodramatic as it may sound—is just what the Red Army soldiers did in World War II).

If we tread our author's path there is no end to the mindlessness we are forced into. It becomes impossible to make balanced judgments assessing both good and bad aspects in a person's work. ("PLP . . . will . . . not apologize one bit for Stalin.") History constantly has to be rewritten when someone who once did something good later becomes a political opponent. (Lin Piao directed the revolutionary conquest of North and Central China in 1948-49. He used to be celebrated as a great military genius. Now it turns out that every battle Lin ever won was planned for him by Mao! The battles he lost he lost on his own, though.)

When it comes down to it the Chinese-Albanian notion of usurpation is founded on the old religious idea that all history is the result of the actions of saviours. A fine how-do-you-do to promote in PL magazine!

Besides giving the reader a wrong version of PL's line, the article disarms the party member who would base his arguments on it, by providing him with an arsenal of dubious and false facts. For example:

**Stalin, Molotov, Beria, et. al. did not "reconstitute the international communist movement on a class struggle line" after World War II. (p. 61) Would that they did.

**The fight against Titoism had nothing to do with advancing the class struggle.

**Stalin's opposition to U.S. imperialism's plan to dominate the world was actually accommodation to U.S. imperialism, provided the U.S. would leave Soviet World War II conquests alone. The U.S. wouldn't, and that is where the tension developed. That is why Europe has been the focus of Soviet-U.S. opposition. The Chinese revolution, the Korean war and the Vietnam war —which were the actual, concrete opposition to U.S. imperialism's growth—were always understood to be beyond the area of U.S.-Soviet conflict. And in fact the Soviets had very little to do with any of these events. "Détente" is really the U.S. finally agreeing to the framework of relations first defined by Stalin's foreign policy. Neither the Soviets, nor the Chinese, had to change their policies; the change came in Washington.

**Not only were there no Zion-

ist plots in the Soviet Union, but the Zionists had no strength or stature even among the world's non-Soviet Jews until Stalin decided to support the creation of Israel in 1947 as a way of weakening the British Empire. He sent the Zionists planes, guns and soldiers. He gave them the necessary diplomatic backing. He created public opinion in their favor. Even Ben-Gurion conceded that Soviet support was the key factor in Zionist success. The Zionist problem arose some years later, after and as a result of the communist movements' adopting Zionism as their solution to the problem posed by the Jewish refugees of the world war. But that problem has nothing to do with plots to kill Stalin.

**The CP never opened the fight against nationalism, religion and so on except in a purely formalistic way, and with low priority. And bad as that is, what is worse is that it considered that that was all it needed to do to destroy reactionary ideology.

***It is irresponsible to describe the purge trials of the '30s exclusively from the trial records. There have been too many critical books, memoirs, special studies and even speeches by high Soviet and other communist leaders attacking the trial records. You cannot at this date make a convincing case for Vyshinsky's case merely by summarizing that able prosecutor, even if everything he said was true. We should have some sensitivity for the intellectual currents of our time so we don't appear as fanatic know-nothings, even if those currents are stirred up by "prostitute professors." If the prostitutes win over public opinion, we have to oppose them on their own ground. Solzhenitsyn's whole appeal lies in his seeming opposition to what most people perceive to be the vast injustice of the purge period. The effect of the fine irony devastatingly directed at Solzhenitsyn in the first few pages of the article is undone by the author's handling of this material.

This article represents PL's line prior to RR III. Its unfortunate publication now indicates not enough is being done to expand the conceptual breakthrough of RR III. This failing is a time bomb that could destroy the party.

Merrill Lynch

EDITOR'S REPLY

PL welcomes comments on all our articles. We reserve the right to reply when necessary.

1. Although we don't want to further increase comrade Lynch's "astonishment and dismay," the article on Solzhenitsyn does indeed represent the "policy of the party." The Party has printed a number of other articles in **PL** Magazine and **Challenge-Desafio** defending communism from the new wave of anti-Stalin scribblers. See **PL** Vol. 9 No. 4, **Challenge-Desafio** March 21, 1974, and **Challenge-Desafio,** March 7, 1974.

2. **Road to Revolution III** certainly does **not** hold "that the communist movement as a whole ceased being revolutionary in fact by the end of the 1920's..." It is difficult to see how one could so grossly misinterpret **RTR III.**

> "The working class held fundamental power during this period. As in all developments, however, quantity turns into quality. The process of capitalist restoration **was completed around the time of the 20th Party Congress in 1956."** (RTR III, p. 11, emphasis ours.)
>
> "From its onset the Russian **revolution** drew an endless series of attacks from the international bourgeoisie. The sharpest external form these attacks took was the fascist invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. The Soviet struggle against this invasion was a key factor in enabling **other revolutions**—particularly the Chinese revolution—to develop." (RTR III, p. 10, emphasis ours.)

3. That the Soviet leadership under Stalin committed grievous errors which laid the basis for the **subsequent restoration of capitalism** is undeniable. All our writings on the subject make this point in quite similar fashion. See and compare RTR III (p. 12), the article on Solzhenitsyn (p. 60-61), the preceeding article on Trotsky (p. 34-35 **PL** Vol. 9, No. 4), and "Road to Revolution I" (in the PL book **Revolution Today,** p. 120-121.) However, despite these extremely serious errors of the Stalin leadership, it is the line of the Progressive Labor Party that:

a. The working class held fundamental power in the Soviet Union during Stalin's lifetime, and the CPSU was a revolutionary force in the international class struggle;

b. The struggle between the CPSU, led by Stalin, and Trotsky's clique was a fundamental struggle; the two lines represented revolution on the one hand, and counter-revolution on the other. The resolution of the struggle in favor of the CPSU gave great impetus for Marxism-Leninism to move forward.

c. Stalin's life was fundamentally that of a revolutionary communist who fought, and did not surrender to, revisionism and capitalism.

So that there can be no question of any "revisionist" editors usurping the editorship, let us note that a recent National Committee meeting of the PLP (August 1974) explicitly reiterated that these three theses represent our line on the question of Stalin.

4. Comrade Lynch is wrong in all his "facts" as well:

a. The fundamental issue with Titoism was the struggle against modern revisionist ideology, state capitalist economic organization, and accommodation with the U.S. imperialists.

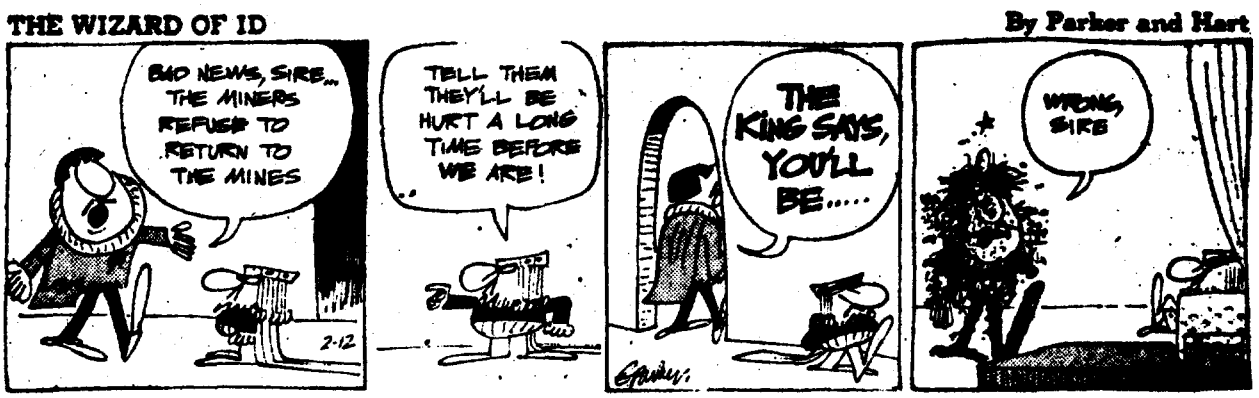
b. The Soviet Union gave full (moral, manpower and material) and effective support to the Korean revolutionaries, which enabled them to defeat the U.S. aggression.

c. The CPSU issued many a number of pamphlets and articles in the post-war period refuting internal nationalists and Zionists as well as external nationalists of the Nehru type.

d. To say that the CPSU was the "key factor" in the creation of the Anglo-American puppet state of Israel is not only logically incomprehensible, but flies in the face of well-known historical facts. To quote here Ben-Gurion's self-serving lies is irresponsible.

e. It was explicitly stated in the article that one of Stalin's mistakes was promoting some cadre on the basis of expertise rather than politics. This explains Khruschev and Malenkov's position before 1953. While Stalin was alive they carefully hid their reactionary politics behind useful works. (Yes, it was Stalin's weakness he didn't see through this.) Nevertheless, when they seized power after Stalin's death they changed from somewhat useful cadre to counter-revolutionary restorationists. But this was all said in the article (p. 60). It is a hallmark of ivory tower idealism not to understand that a person can turn into his opposite just as a society can.

6. Finally, we get to the bone in the throat of all bourgeois liberals—the Moscow trials. Here we are told we can't use the trial records, even though their veracity is testified to by all witnesses at the trial (including the U.S. ambassador). Instead we are to use the "many critical books," etc., by capitalist professors, who weren't within 1000 miles of Moscow—or speeches by Khruschev and his cronies! Well, **Progressive Labor** is an organ of working class propaganda; it tells the unconditional truth of class struggle; we are "sensitive to the intellectual current of our time," but we don't surrender to these "intellectual currents." We won't be bound by the literary rules of a bourgeois university.


THE WIZARD OF ID
By Parker and Hart
BAD NEWS, SIRE... THE MINERS REFUSE TO RETURN TO THE MINES
TELL THEM THEY'LL BE HURT A LONG TIME BEFORE WE ARE!
THE KING SAYS, YOU'LL BE.....
WRONG, SIRE

International Round-Up

ANGOLA

The Portuguese government has signed an agreement with the three Liberation movements in Angola—MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), FNLA (Front for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (Union for the Total Independence of Angola). The agreement calls for a 10-month transition period in which a constituent assembly will be elected. In the meantime, a form of provisional government consisting of the Portuguese government and the three liberation movements will 'ensure' this transition. In this provisional government the Portuguese government is in charge of 'defense and security' and will also head the ministries of Economy, Communications, Transport and Public Works. It is also expected that some of the Portuguese government officials will remain in office as Angolans after the 'independence.' The three organizations will each provide 8,000 soldiers, making a total of 24,000, to be matched by another 2,400 by the Portuguese forces.

THAT THIS 'INDEPENDENCE' is a sham is obvious. But worst of all it is an outright betrayal of the Angolan people who suffered for so long under Portuguese colonialism. As was pointed out in **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** (Vol. 11, Nos. 13, 14), this betrayal is possible because of nationalism and revisionism. The corrupt leadership of these three so-called liberation movements have manipulated themselves into the inheritance of the Portuguese colonial apparatus, for development of their own elite class. They are succeeding because they have won the people to the idea that 'independence' means a government run by 'Angolans'—regardless of class. In addition, the left, who know something about classes, have been misled by world revisionism, especially of the Chinese and Soviet varieties, with the "two-stage" and "New democracy" bullshit, into supporting this nationalist trap. Today, the exploited masses of Angolan people have simply the same masters in new clothes; and worst of all, with the rivalry of these three 'liberation' cultures, there is a possibility of unleashing vicious tribal politics which might culminate in the murder of millions of workers and peasants as happened in Nigeria.

DETENTE

We won't and don't mince words. The so-called Ford-Brezhnev "diplomatic triumph" and "historic breakthrough" at Vladivostok is a bunch of crap.

Take the "big" Strategic Arms Agreement: They say they've put a cap on the number of missiles each side will be permitted to have (about 2500). This is supposed to end the arms race. Baloney!

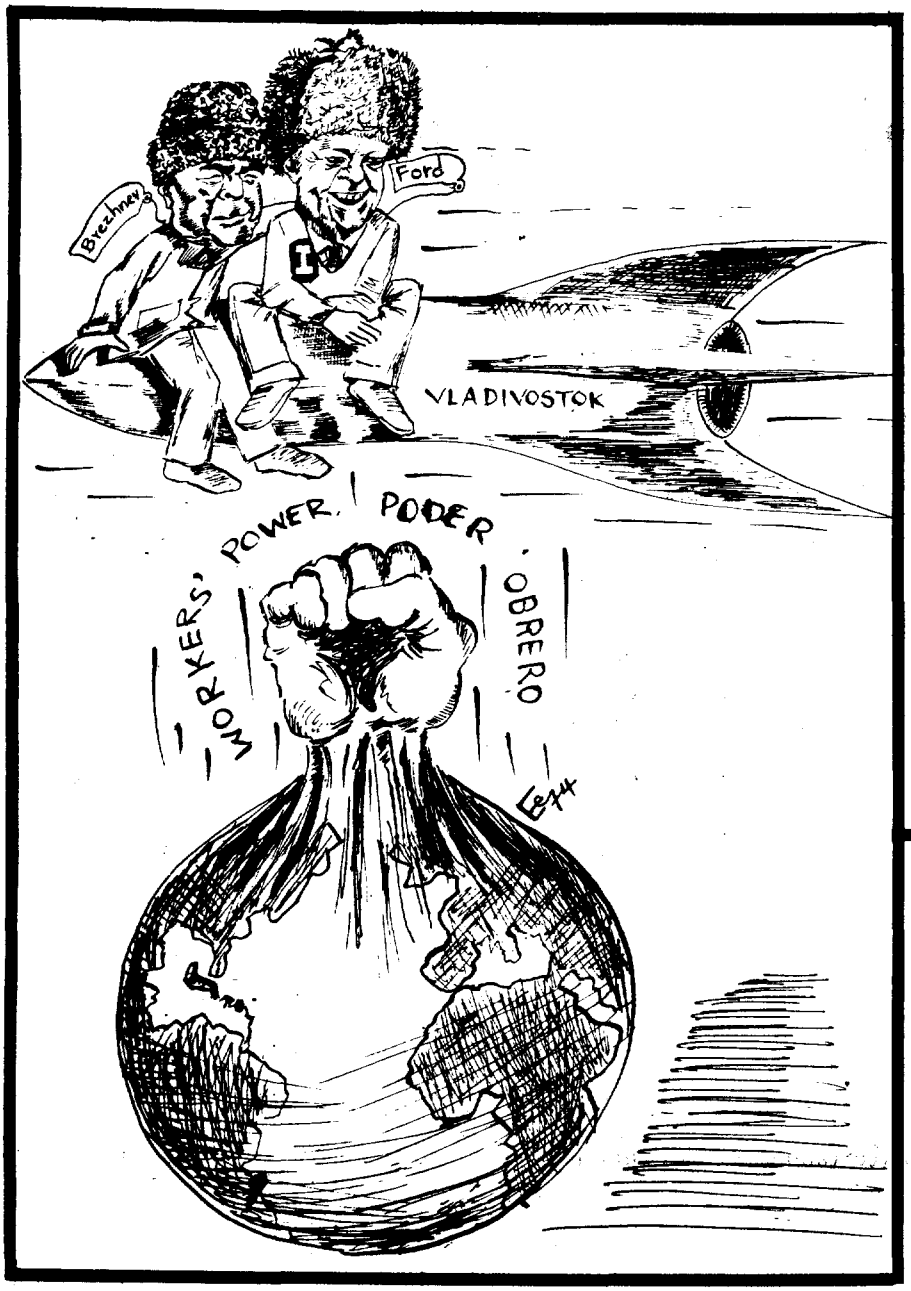
What they don't tell us is that there is no limit to the number of multi-nuclear warheads (MIRVS) that go on each missile! In other words, the workers will continue to be taxed to death to maintain the profitable nuclear arms business. And what about the billions that go for conventional weapons? And after all, what are these weapons for? To get workers in one country to kill workers from another country, in order to protect big-money interests.

For example, there's the Mid-East situation. **U.S. News and World Report** (December 2, 1974) says, "U.S. military intervention to secure oil supplies vital to the Western industrialized nations cannot be ruled out.... Military planners estimate that three divisions will be required to take over the oil fields." With 80 billion dollars a year in oil revenue at stake, what's three divisions of U.S. working class kids in uniform worth? Not to mention the Arab and Jewish workers' kids that can be put into the battle.

Then when the U.S. moves in the troops to take over, what will the Russians do? "Nothing," says **U.S. News and World Report**. "The Russians are realists when it comes to vital interests—their's or America's.... The Soviets recognize that American military intervention in Arab oil states involve vital U.S. interests and only marginal Russian interests. They would stand aside—just as we did in Czechoslovakia" (when Russia invaded).

U.S. reliance on Soviet revisionist collaboration to wheel and deal about vital interests (i.e., big money) are the guts of what the Vladivostok agreements represent. (Wouldn't you like to hear a tape of these discussions?) As James Reston of the **New York Times** commented about Vladivostok: "At least...the Soviet leaders didn't try to take advantage of the disarray of the West, but supported the policy of detente with the U.S." (Wasn't that nice of these Russian "revolutionary" leaders, who call themselves "Communists?" Lenin turns over in his mausoleum so often that he looks like a spinning top!)

Foreign Affairs, October 1974, the quarterly journal of the authoritative Council on Foreign Relations, also stated clearly the significance of detente negotiations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in its lead article: "There is a new distribution of power in the world and we must learn to deal with it.... By the



early 1970's this system (world capitalism) faced a visible breakdown . . . in its monetary affairs, and was already in the throes of an acute crisis of inflation . . . . Inflation accompanied by stagnation was a new and bewildering phenomenon . . . . In the last year, all these developments combined to form the essence of what may now be termed a total crisis; one that is both economic and political and involves the entire international system. **Fortunately, this crisis coincides with a period in which political and military security issues are muted, and some of the major divisions in the world are being bridged and healed. But we must seize the opportunities presented by detente . . . to deal effectively with our economic problems."**

In plain words, detente agreements at Vladivostok or elsewhere is the effort of the U.S. and Russian bosses to divide up the capitalist world market in accordance with their new power relations, without having a head-on military confrontation.

But detente diplomacy, whether it is pursued by Brezhnev, Kissinger or Mao, is not the fundamental force that will shape international political developments. Despite the wheeling and dealing, the wining and dining, the toasts with vodka or mao tai by the revisionists in Moscow and Peking with their Washington pals, the fundamental economic-political contradictions between the super-imperialists will continue to intensify. The decline of the U.S. will continue vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and particularly as the economy of the old imperialist world system comes apart at the seams. The new distribution of power will inevitably lead to the U.S. bosses gambling with military adventures to reverse its declining position . . . as in the Mid-East and elsewhere.

Workers everywhere must not get suckered into supporting new imperialist wars to solve the problems of a dying capitalist system. While the Soviet and Chinese leaders sell out the international working class, the workers press forward the class struggle throughout the globe.

CHINA

The National People's Congress, recently held in Peking, underscores the rightist leadership and policies that have emerged in China as a result of the defeat of the Left in the Cultural Revolution (1966-68).

THE TOP LEADERSHIP OF THE STATE, selected at this Congress, is composed overwhelmingly of "capitalist roaders" and "revisionists" who had been denounced during the Cultural Revolution, but who are now being "rehabilitated." The outstanding example of the return of deposed rightists is Teng Hsiao-ping. In 1966-67, Teng was attacked by Red Guards as a revisionist and counter-revolutionary and removed from his post as Secretary-General of the Communist Party. In the past three years, Teng has returned to power. At the Congress, he was confirmed as Vice-Premier of the State Council, second only to Premier Chou En-lai in the day-to-day control of government affairs.

The return of rightists to power has been engineered by Premier

Chou, who gave the keynote address to the Congress. In the past year, Chou has tried to sidetrack increasing criticism of his revisionist policies. Chou used the "criticize Lin Piao, criticize Confucius" campaign to harmlessly divert criticism of the present right wing path of the Chinese leadership by blaming everything on Confucius and Lin, both of whom are dead. Nevertheless, the anti-revolutionary nature of Chou's policies were clear in his speech at the Congress. Chou's guiding principle can be summed up in three words: "Forget class struggle."

Internationally, Chou noted the possibility of a world war between the two "super powers," the USSR and the U.S., touched off by their fierce competition. However, Chou sees the main opposition to the "hegemony of the super powers" in the bourgeois nationalists of the so-called Third World. Chou calls the Third World bourgeoisie the "main force for revolution." He even included the imperialist states of Western Europe within the progressive, anti-hegemony bloc. Instead of appealing to workers and peasants to turn the coming imperialist world war into a class war for socialism, Chou's aim is solely to take advantage of the U.S.-USSR conflict, in order to build up China into the world's third superpower. In terms of domestic policy, Chou advocated a return to economic policies of 1964, denounced as revisionist during the Cultural Revolution. The main aspect of Chou's revisionist economic program is the emphasis on "order and stability" in order to "modernize" China. What this really means is "class peace": harmony between the exploiters and the exploited domestically and internationally ("peaceful coexistence"). This peace and order will allow the "modernization of a stable and orderly China." Internally, this means guaranteeing the re-emergence of capitalist economic relations. Two provisions of the new Constitution adopted at the Congress demonstrate this: Article 7 guarantees the right of peasants to farm private plots, and Article 5 allows non-agricultural workers to work for themselves.

However, Chou's dream of "class peace" inside China and around the world will be shattered. Chou's attempt to present a phony unified front of revisionists, bourgeois nationalists and European capitalists as the way to deal with worsening economic conditions and war will be rejected by revolutionaries around the world, who see the fight for socialism as the answer to wars and unemployment. Furthermore, Chinese workers and peasants have risen up before to overthrow revisionist leaders, and they will do so again to restore socialism in China.

(See article on China, this issue, p. 13.)

MIDEAST

Once again the crisis in the Mid-East is reaching the boiling point. It appears that another Israel-Arab war is imminent. As in the previous wars, the only winners will be those forces who will be able to tighten their hold over Mid-East oil and its fabulous profits.

Since the last war the superwealthy Arabian oil barons, backed by the leaders of Syria and Egypt, armed and trained by the Soviet Union, have secured a stronger grip over the oil. Previously the oil fields were primarily controlled by the large U.S. oil companies, who relied heavily on the state of Israel for military control of the Middle-East. The U.S. bosses could count on the servility of Arab over-lords who relied exclusively on Western investment markets and technology. The Arab bosses reached a certain measure of independence from U.S. oil companies as a result of the last war. The war proved that their military forces were reaching parity with the Israelis. And it was only a matter of time before they surpassed Israel militarily. This is the reality as long as the Soviet Union keeps supplying and training Egyptian and Syrian forces.

Within the past decade the Soviet Union became a recognized force in the Mid-East even though they owned no land and had little previous influence. The Soviets and their Arab cronies know full well that the Western industrial nations (to a lesser extent the U.S.) are vitally dependent on Mid-East oil. Thus, the past oil embargo and its resultant enormous rate hikes for consumers quickly intensified economic contradictions from the U.S. to Japan. Naturally, the U.S. bosses can afford the oil price hikes more than Japan and Italy. But even the early U.S. advantage over its Western allies and competitors collapsed under the pressures of high prices. The U.S. ability to dump products around the world was curtailed because of similar conditions in most countries. Again, Western economies were in a state of decline, so it would be incorrect to say that the tremendous rise in oil prices was a root cause. But it is fair to say that rapid oil price rises were a serious factor deepening the current depression in most industrial countries.

As in the past, the question of the Palestinian people has become the seeming focal point of the current antagonisms. The state of Israel has robbed the Palestinian people of their land and held them in typical fascist fashion. They are oppressed as workers. They are forced to exist under concentration camp conditions. Palestinians have no citizenship rights. Over the years different Arab leaders have tried to speak and act for the Palestinians. For some years it was King Hussein of Jordan. However, Hussein was basically a stooge of the U.S. and always betrayed and killed militant Palestinians for the Israelis. His betrayals were so obvious, other Mid-East leaders of the Arab world recently dumped him in favor of the new "folk hero" Arafat. Supposedly, Arafat really represents Palestinian liberation.

Two weeks ago in a large demonstration in Beirut many Palestinians and other Arab militants marched in a Palestinian liberation demonstration and condemned Arafat as another sell-out. Several Palestinian guerrilla groups left Arafat's PLO and called him a traitor. As in the past, the Palestinian people are being used by the Arab bosses to further their economic dreams.

Workers and oppressed people of the Mid-East, Israelis and Arabs, are caught in the middle of an economic and political war.

PLO Leader Arafat

For the moment, on one side there are the U.S. and Israelis. On the other there are the Soviets and the Arab leaders. On occasion these sides seem to shift and change. The fact is that no matter what the line-up, the people have nothing to gain from any alignment of various bosses. Already there are some indications that the U.S., in time, will dump their Israeli stooges because the Israelis are ultimately doomed as the Mid-East policeman. There is even the seemingly weird possibility that the Soviets might opt for some detente with the Israelis. All types of alignments are possible as each group aims to secure its political and profit positions. It is possible that the U.S. may move militarily into the Mid-East. This would speed-up the start of World War Three. Obviously, workers around the world have nothing to gain and everything to lose by allowing themselves to be drawn into different bosses' machinations.

As if to prove this point, while thousands of U.S. Israeli supporters mill around the United Nations protesting against Arafat's acceptance in the bosses' club, **Israeli workers are fighting like all hell against Israeli bosses.** The reason for this is that the policies of Israeli bosses have proven ruinous to Israeli workers. At a recent trade union meeting in Israel, "A representative of Haifa municipal workers was pushed off the platform by industrial workers when he opposed anti-government demonstrations. An uproar prevented an official of the Ministry of Commerce from continuing his speech after he said there was room in Israel for capitalists too." (N.Y. **Times**, Nov. 14, 1974) Further rip-offs and attacks against Israeli workers were exposed by the current devaluations which benefit foreign investors. For example: "Meanwhile real estate sources report that American Jews had taken advantage of the devaluation by buying second homes in Israel. A studio apartment that previously cost $34,000 now costs $24,000, while a full-floor penthouse in the most fashionable area can be had for $380,000, down from $462,000." (N.Y. **Times**, Nov. 14, 1974) So much for the notion of Israeli socialism.

Now in the U.S., the shifts that are beginning to happen in U.S. policy are having important manifestations for Jews and all people. Gen. Brown, Chief of U.S. armed forces, sent up a trial balloon for most bosses when he put forward the old Hitler lie that the Jews own the banks and newspapers. (Gee whiz! We never realized that Rockefeller was Jewish.) So the Israeli fascist bosses' policies are coming home to roost. Jewish workers in Israel forced to riot because, as all workers around the world, their living conditions are being attacked. In the U.S. anti-semitism is being stepped up, as is racism. Thus, all workers, regardless of ethnic and cultural background, must unite in order to stay alive and secure their just aspirations. Additionally, Jews, Arabs and everyone else are going to be drawn into another bosses' war and slaughtered, unless they shed suicidal national outlooks and replace them with the outlook of the working class and socialism. Workers know no national boundaries. National boundaries, and ideas of nationalism, are bosses' contrivances. These bosses' ideas only divide workers from one another.

The only way forward in the Mid-East for workers and oppressed people is to drop the idea of national territory and unite on a class basis. Israeli and Arab people are being robbed by big oil bosses. Each boss wants to enlist workers who they now control to gain advantage over other bosses so they can make more money by exploiting more workers. Workers must have the opposite outlook. Israeli and Arab revolutionaries always follow these aims. It was only two years ago that Israeli bosses jailed those Israeli communists who advocate this point of view. Israeli bosses characterized these revolutionaries as "the most serious threat to the state of Israeli." Let us make the goals of those revolutionaries the reality!

NIGERIA

Nigeria, with its oil economy, has become an important outpost for imperialism in Africa. Considering the world oil crisis, it is not surprising that Nigeria has also become the scene of sharp inter-imperialist competition. Imperialist companies from the U.S., Europe, Japan and the Soviet Union are scrambling for a place in the booming Nigerian frontier. At the same time the British imperialists are trying very hard to hold on to one of the few remaining areas under their control.

It has not been all that bad for the indigenous Nigerian bosses either. New millionaires have been springing up and Nigeria is said to have the fastest growing middle class in Africa, if not the whole world. This year the share of the Nigerian government in the oil profit will be an unprecedented $8.1 million.

Faced with the fact that life is becoming unbearable for the majority of the people with record high prices (rent for one room in Lagos is about $15 a month—one-half the average monthly family income) and record high unemployment, the government has instituted a wage review commission known as the **UDOJI** commission.

This commission is not only a phony but is composed of all kinds of imperialists at the invitation of the shameless Nigerian bosses, who could not even trust their apologist professors sitting in the Nigerian universities. The

special consultants of the **UDOJI** commission all came from the U.S. and Australia and the different task forces were made up of representatives from various imperialist companies—particularly the British company Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Co. Thus the members of the commission are from British and U.S. imperialism. In **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** we pointed out that the British hope to maintain their rule in Nigeria with the aid of the U.S. We also pointed out that the Nigerian government is run by the northern bosses, who are in competition with the southern bosses and who rule with the aid of British imperialism. This is borne out by the **UDOJI** commission.

The **UDOJI** commission was supposed to give big wage increases to the Nigerian workers. This was to be the first major wage increase for workers in over 15 years, but now this wage increase is only to affect government workers—only 1% of the work force. This is clearly an attempt to divide the workers. Also, the wage increases are structured so that the lowest paid workers get the smallest increase. This wage increase also became an excuse for the greedy merchants and landlords to shoot prices into the skies—some prices went up as much as 300%. The net result is a substantial wage cut for the masses of Nigerian workers.

The Nigerian workers are not going to stand for these attacks and attempts to divide them. Already many spontaneous strikes and protests have erupted, but there is still a great need to build a revolutionary communist movement like **PL** in order to deal with the imperialists and Nigerian capitalists and send them where they belong, into their graves. And in their place build a human society run by the ordinary working people for the interests of working people—a society of **SOCIALISM.**

PUERTO RICO

The colonial governor Rafael H. Colon is laying off thousands of public employees and increasing prices in order to alleviate the enormous budget deficit which his government faces.

The same situation is happening in private industries, where there has been a lot of plant closing as well as "accidental fires." During January, the Department of Public "Education" fired 2,500 teachers; the Ruiz Soler Hospital fired 215 doctors, nurses and paramedical personnel; the Health Department laid off 1,000 hospital and health center employees, cutting back on services provided to the workers who go to them due to the high prices charged by private institutions. Also, all public employees are being pressured to accept a "voluntary" 15 per cent cutback in their already lousy wages—or else lose their jobs. For Feb. 1, 7,569 more public employees will be fired.

In private industries, the petrochemical plant Fibers International of Guayama announced the total closing of its operations, leaving out in the streets 2,300 workers and worsening the economic situation of the area. Fleetwood Novelty of Loiza also closed its operations, affecting 100 workers. In Lares, four factories closed at the same time, affecting 1,200 workers. The Barranquita Shoes plant, struck by its workers, burnt down "accidentally," and the General Electric plant in Vega Alta also went the same way, leaving 1,000 workers without jobs.

In front of all these bosses' attacks and faced by the crisis caused by the production anarchy which characterizes the capitalist system, the workers have had to fight them all alone, since the so-called trade union leaders have done absolutely nothing to protect the workers they are supposed to represent.

At the moment, the Americana Hotel is on strike. The strikers have burnt down a scab car and have fought the cops; several workers have been arrested. The doctors at the Mayaguez Medical Center are on strike, and a strike vote has been taken at the University Hospital of Rio Piedras. The RCA company of Barcelonet, the workers of Concrete Steel Formo from Carolina, are also on strike. The long strike against the McDonald's restaurants of P.R. is still on. The Ponce Cement Co. workers have taken a strike vote against the ex-governor Ferré (owner of Ponce Cement).

The 600 drivers and mechanics of the Metropolitan Bus Authority are threatening a strike, since their contract expired December 31. The Union is demanding a one-year contract (the Authority wants a 3-year contract).

The answer to the bosses' attack has been a militant fighting one, but spontaneous due to the lack of organization. The workers answer will one day pass from an economic strike to a revolutionary insurrectional strike, led by its Communist Party (the Puerto Rican Socialist League), which will lead to the taking over of political power and to the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in a free and socialist Puerto Rico.

—Northern Regional Committee of the PRSL

An Updated Look at China

What will happen in China when Mao and Chou die? Will there be a struggle for power? Will the Left rise to power? Will Sino-U.S. detente end and an era of Sino-Soviet rapprochement begin?

THERE WILL BE NO POWER STRUGGLE. IT has already taken place. A three-man team—Teng Hsiao-ping, Li Hsien-nien and Chiao Kuan-hua—has already succeeded to Chou's position and are in firm control of government policy and administration.

Chinese policy in the near future will continue the pattern set since the Cultural Revolution, a pattern not very different from that of 1955-60.

In foreign affairs China will continue a high level of foreign economic relations, with continued emphasis on ties to the U.S., Japan and West Germany.

Politically the de facto anti-Soviet alliance with the U.S. will continue, as will competition with the U.S.S.R. for influence in Asia and Africa.

China will tend increasingly to act like a typical big power, albeit a regional big power.

So far as the international communist movement is concerned, China will become less and less significant in the coming period. Never very interested in the world movement when a Maoist international was on the verge of existence, China is now confronted with the collapse of the Maoist groups in the various countries. This is in sharp contrast to the leadership of Stalin who used the growing strength of the U.S.S.R. as a base for a very strong international movement.

The Chinese leaders wish to emulate Stalin by creating a strong China, but are indifferent to a movement, and are even made impotent by their line from fostering any movement in their image. So any remaining Maoist group will have a difficult time becoming strong through China's reflected glory, as the Communist Parties were able to bask in the U.S.S.R.'s glory in the 1930's.

Domestically China will continue to experience a slow growth in living standards, accompanied by a faster growth in inequality in income distribution and political power.

The Chinese Left remains what it has been since the Cultural Revolution—a huge, confused, defeated, unorganized and dispersed group. Its former leaders—none with national stature—are isolated, jailed or dead. The Left will be the principal beneficiary of Mao's death. Unhampered by his presence, which confused them; unchecked by his policy, which they misunderstood—the Left will develop new leaders who will organize a powerful Communist movement using Mao's aura and some of his slogans. But this is not for the near future.

THE LITMUS TEST OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The goal of the Maoist leadership has always been the "regeneration of China," meaning its economic development. Changes in social structure were promoted or opposed depending on whether those changes helped or hindered economic progress. (In this the Maoists did not differ from accepted Communist practice.) The best reflection of political developments has been China's foreign economic relations. In fact, the economic relations have been the political developments.

THE 1953-1960 PERIOD

Chinese foreign trade and other foreign economic dealings, such as technical aid and loans, were almost exclusively with the Soviet Union and the Soviet bloc from the time China revived from the Civil-Korean War in 1953 until 1960. The leadership's concern was to industrialize and to improve farming. Land collectivization and mechanization and industrialization by means of wholesale imports of new plants and equipment from the East bloc were the twin pillars of developmental policy.

While in the period before 1953 (when there was no foreign aid available) the emphasis was placed on worker innovation to make do with and upgrade existing plant, in the following period this policy was condemned (a period of workers' innovation is always, inevitably, also a period in which there is a powerful trend for workers' power). In the 1953-1960 period the stress was on mastering modern Soviet technique. This policy always places technicians on a high pedestal,

CHINA HINTS SHIFT IN TOP ARMY POST

Former Chief of Staff, Once Reviled, May Have Been Restored to Leadership

By JOSEPH LELYVELD

Special to The New York Times

HONG KONG, Dec. 16—Nearly seven years ago, a leading Chinese military figure, Yang Cheng-wu, was reviled as a "counter revolutionary double-dealer" and "reptile" and was purged as acting chief of staff of the army.

Now he may have been restored to the same post—the top operational command in the Chinese Army—as part of an effort to reshape the military leadership to make it more responsive to orders issued by the Communist party in the name of its chairman, Mao Tse-tung.

Mr. Yang, who was a general before military ranks were formally abolished in China, was publicly rehabilitated only last summer. His regaining of authority was revealed indirectly, as such shifts in Peking's power structure usually are, when he was listed this month ahead of two of the army's deputy chiefs of staff attending a memorial service for a recently decreased member of the Central Committee.

The officer who functions as chief of staff has responsibility for making the army responsive to the party's directions. The sensitivity of the job is indicated by the fact that everyone who has held it in the last 20 years has finally been demoted or purged.

The man who replaced Mr. Yang when he was disgraced in March, 1968, Huang Yung-shang, was himself purged less than three years later on the ground that he plotted with Lin Piao, then the Defense Minister, to overthrow Chairman Mao. The post has not been publicly filled since that time.

Yang a Military Hero

Mr. Yang, who is 62 years old, is an authentic military hero. At the age of only 23 he was political commissar of the Red Army regiment that won the key battles on the epochal Long March. Before he was 30 he was an important leader of Communist forces operating behind Japanese lines in northern China.

But the crimes he was accused of during the Cultural Revolution were linked at a public meeting in Peking to the "foul-smelling excrement of a dog." Indeed, the accusations against him were so numerous and diverse that analysts have never been able to agree on what it was that really got him into trouble.

Among other things, he was said to have used "secret police tactics," including hidden listening devices, to spy on Chairman Mao and his wife, Chiang Ching. Mr. Yang was even accused of encouraging his own daughter to have illicit sexual relations with an air force officer as part of a plot to undermine the air force chief of staff.

Presumably these lurid accusations can be forgotten because they were made originally by Defense Minister Lin, who now heads the list of reprobates. But there was another charge made at the time that may offer a clue to the reasons behind Mr. Yang's sudden reemergence. Various Red Guard publications portrayed him as an "ambitionist" who had been scheming to supplant the commanders of some of the major military regions in China.

As this article indicates, right-wing bureaucrats are being restored to power in China. We doubt that their scent has changed much since the Cultural Revolution.

promotes divisions in the working class, reinforces class stratification and places power in the hands of an elite.

Both policies were initiated by Mao, Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai and Teng Hsiao-ping (to name the most prominent). But Mao, in his characteristic way, presented both policies dressed up in radical garb and let the others administer them, claiming for himself the right to denounce his colleagues when he felt it opportune.

THE 1960's

Cut off from Soviet technology in 1960 and having no alternate source, Chinese leaders again stressed self-reliance and worker innovation while trying simultaneously to form ties with Japan. This ultimately produced a crisis in Chinese society, as a powerful Left trend developed over a six-year period, animated by Communist ideals, which clashed with what was in effect a bourgeois structure based on economic development. **This was the Cultural Revolution.**

As we know, the Left failed, largely because of its misestimate of Mao and its consequent failure to unite nationally to offer alternate organization—a new Party—as a source of leadership. Mao, Chou and Lin Piao effectively manipulated the Left's shortcomings, and the Maoist leadership emerged from the rebellion able to resume guiding the nation along the road leading to their vision of a prosperous China.

CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY

This coincided roughly with America's military defeat in Vietnam, a military defeat coupled with a diplomatic victory. This event convinced the bulk of the remaining skeptics among the American ruling class that their previous policy of military containment of the Asian Communist revolution was unworkable and unnecessary. Since that policy was a response to the Communist

triumph in China, its abandonment meant a new China policy had to be developed by the State Department. That new policy could only be containment through partnership. The Chinese leaders were ready, and all the more eager since Sino-American detente made a Russian attack on China an impossibility, at least in the immediate future.

THE 1970's AND OIL

So Chinese foreign economic relations revived again in about 1970. Now Japan was China's main trading partner, soon to be followed closely by the U.S., West Germany and France. But trade for cash was the main aspect of these relations; the Left was still too strong to permit the leadership to accept long term credits from imperialism. Nor were foreign banks breaking their necks to extend credit, since China is after all poor and did not seem to have an export potential large enough to earn the foreign exchange needed to pay back large loans.

Onto this potentially troubling situation was poured oil. A vigorous prospecting drive begun in the mid-1960's, in the self-reliance period, discovered huge oil deposits underground in the northeast (150 miles northwest of Harlin) and offshore near Tientsin in the Gulf of Pohai. By 1970 Chinese officials were claiming that in terms of reserves China was the world's oil-richest nation. Lacking exploring, production and refining equipment, China bought what she could from Rumania, equipping her land fields with Rumanian equipment, and began domestic equipment production.

Offshore development was harder since the technology is monopolized by U.S. concerns, with Japan and West Germany having a minor piece of the action.

By 1973 China had its first exportable crude production. With that a buying drive began for the latest plant and equipment for oil production and refining and petrochemical development. **Almost no other significant capital goods or technology purchases were made.** $1.2 billion in oil plant was bought in 1973, with delivery scheduled for 1975-77, the sellers all from the U.S., Japan and West Germany. In 1974 Chinese buying continued at the same level. By the end of 1974 China had racked up a $2 billion foreign debt.

Oil production is zooming upwards. On the one hand it is needed as raw material for the petrochemical complexes to come, turning out chemical fertilizer, fibers, plastics, fuel. On the other hand 10% of crude is earmarked for export. In 1974 that could bring in $500 million.

These enormous purchases have put China in the credit market, but so far in a short-term way. China puts 20%-30% down, openly agrees to pay 6% interest on payments spread over five years, hides the true, higher rate of interest elsewhere in the sales contract, calls the arrangement "deferred payment," and denies it is seeking credit or has any foreign debt. American and Canadian bankers—of which a small stream has been trickling in and out of Peking throughout 1974—say they have received feelers from the Chinese on long term loans.

Whether or not that is true, the Chinese leaders have made agreements to pay out $2 billion over the next five years. It is reasonable to conclude they expect to be involved in stable, profitable business relations for at least five years—relations which will produce not a balanced trade, but a net profit of $2 billion.

More than that, China intends to buy even more oil technology, and that means continued U.S. ties even if there is some temporary Sino-Soviet "rapprochement." China has announced plans to increase chemical fertilizer production 40% over the next 2 years.

SINO-U.S. POLITICAL COOPERATION

The Sino-American economic nexus carries with it Sino-American political cooperation. Involved in a common anti-Soviet front, China has no way to oppose U.S. imperialism's moves to strengthen itself strategically. **In fact China supports this.** China supports a strong NATO; supports the U.S. base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean; recognizes the Chilean junta; supports the CIA's nominee in Angola, Holden Roberto; is developing friendly relations with the Marcos regime in the Phillippines; and is on good terms with America's Persian Gulf ace, the Shah of Iran.

But China also supports the sale of French arms to the Middle Eastern tyrants "provided the terms are fair," because that strengthens France against the U.S., and the Middle East regimes against Soviet pressures.

China supports high oil prices because that strengthens the "Third World" against the old imperialist world (although Russia also benefits from this).

IN SHORT, CHINA SUPPORTS ANY ASPECT OF ANY CONTRADICTION EXCEPT ONE—WORKING CLASS REVOLUTION.

THE INTERNATIONAL LEFT

The defeat of the Chinese Left and the defection of China from the Communist movement were sharp blows from which the world's working class has not yet recovered. It strengthened reaction's hand, divided and confused revolutionaries everywhere. It lengthened the period of transition to socialism and complicated it. If China's leaders were able to continue to pose as militant leftists that would wreak more havoc.

But now the world is undergoing a period of sharp class struggle. China will be seen clearly to be on the wrong side as this period develops. While on the one hand that will temporarily confuse things, ultimately it will cause a qualitative leap forward in people's understanding of what Communism is all about and in their allegiance to the revolutionary struggle—provided PL continues patient but bold effective organizing, and comes to lead a significant section of mass struggle and steps up its educational work.

War and Fascism are Inevitable; Workers Will Turn Imperialist War Into Civil War as...

U.S. Depression Opens the Door for Revolution

I. END OF "THE AMERICAN CENTURY"

It was only a short time ago that the "truce" accord was reached in the Vietnam War. If nothing else, it unified a seemingly diverse group of political forces. Those singing Hail Mary's to "peace" in our country ranged from Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon to the Communist Party, the Socialist Workers Party, various pacifist groups, and not least the Kennedy-type politicians. What irony! — while Nixon and his goons turned the CIA loose to investigate "dissidents," the "dissidents" were inadvertently his most ardent supporters.

Since the late sixties, the world has entered the Era of Peace—supposedly. Detente between the world's two leading adversaries, the Soviet Union and the United States, is supposed to be a harbinger of things to come.

But is this the real world? Is it a reflection of the true nature of imperialist powers? (Remember the "Entente Cordiale" and the Kellogg "Peace" Pact before the last World War?)

Only recently, Dr. "Strange-love"-Kissinger, using his most compelling croak, spoke of the "possibility" of U.S. armed intervention in the Mid-East to secure the oil interests of his boss, Rockefeller. Naturally, within days, that great virtuoso of nothingness, Ford, had to echo the Kissinger statements. (Previously there had been talk that Kissinger was only speaking for himself, i.e. Rockefeller, and some said that Ford was in disagreement. Ford's hasty "O.K. Rocky," soon laid that fiction to rest.)

In the last few weeks, U.S. chieftans brazenly announced they were starting new spy flights over Vietnam in violation of the "truce" agreements. What a burlesque! What truce? Since the "truce," the war in Vietnam has not abated. And now Ford intends to use the latest U.S. provocations to try to increase the intensity of the Vietnam war one way or another.

Even poor old Anthony Lewis and Tom Wicker of the **N.Y. Times** have to cry out; What the hell are you so worried about Vietnam for when we are about to lose out or are being seriously challenged in the Mid-East?

Obviously, the various fake leftists and liberals are concerned about peace only if it directly affects them. The war in Vietnam was terrible because U.S. soldiers had to fight and die. Now that most U.S. troops are out of Vietnam, the war is bad, but not so terrible. Obviously, the collection of fake leftists, liberals and pacifists have settled nothing. In fact, they have only succeeded in setting back the cause of peace by acting against the only force capable of eventually winning real peace—revolution.

Based on history, we can expect every new peace treaty signed between the Soviets and the U.S. to bring us closer to war. Every trip to the Mid-East by Hopalong Henry has only succeeded in making the Mid-East war more likely. Are these crucial developments accidents of history? Are developments merely a question of which individuals are in power? We think not!

War and fascism are the results of the profit system. And the only way to end these twin blights and others is by the elimination of the capitalist system. This is the root cause of the problem. But what has brought us closer to World War III, and fascism, at this particular moment?

LEARNING FROM HISTORY

MANY PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE RULING class, have a view of the world that either negates change, or develops the notion that change can be slowed and stopped. This is nonsense. History should prove that change is inherent in all things.

Remember, only a short time ago Hitler spoke of the "Thousand Year Reich." The "Thousand Year Reich" lasted about twelve years—that left the Nazis about 988 short. But when Hitler uttered his absurdity he believed it. More important, most forces in the world saw some possibility of it. The Germans had conquered Europe, they took over much of Africa, they had brought England to its knees at Dunkirk, the U.S. was isolated, and the attack against the Soviet Union seemed a sure

winner. Leading political and military strategists in this country, like Hansen Baldwin, then writing for the New York **Times**, agreed with the Hitler prediction that the war against the Soviets would be over in "six weeks."

The "Thousand Year Reich" seemed not to be so absurd at that. After all, "everyone loves a winner," or "you can't argue with success."

This superficial view was based on the lack of understanding of what creates change. Basically, the estimate of the ruling classes of most countries was that the Soviets couldn't repel and crush Hitler. Thus, they believed that sooner or later they would probably have to make a deal. But, whatever errors the Soviet leadership made, they did organize the workers to fight Hitler, and they did win. U.S. bosses, caught in their false estimates about workers' power, about Stalin, about Hitler's strength, came up with a wrong view of the world.

THE "AMERICAN CENTURY"

NO SOONER HAD THE GUNS OF WORLD WAR II quieted, than U.S. bosses trumpeted the glorious arrival of the "American Century." This was the U.S. bosses' version of the "Thousand Year Reich." Obviously, they learned little. On the face of it things looked fine. The Soviets were bled white by their stupendous war effort. Japan, Germany, etc. were defeated and economically ruined. The rest of Europe was not much better off. Only the U.S. emerged unscathed. The war had seemed to solve several problems for the ruling class at once. Just before the war there were still ten million workers unemployed. Enormous war production and an army of about 15 million solved that. New war industries were quickly converted to increase consumer production and expand arms production. The U.S. indeed seemed the best of all places. And, if there was racism, well, who's perfect? The American dream, the "American Century," looked pretty good.

But as we all know the U.S. economy is on its ass today. U.S. power is being challenged and rebuffed from Vietnam to Beirut. The "American Century" might be more aptly called the "Century of the breadline." Let's see, the "American Century" idea started about 1949. It's now 1975. That's about 25 years. Not bad—the prediction is only 75 years off.

But even during the 25 peak years millions have been racially oppressed. There has been consistent mass unemployment and virtually constant war, from Korea and Vietnam to the Dominican Republic. And don't forget the Cuba Missile Crisis in which the U.S. money bags were "eyeball to eye-ball" with the Soviets. It was at this juncture that the world was faced with atomic war with the rapidly growing Soviet economic and political machine. Soviet power was by now firmly in the hands of counter-revolutionaries, and was starting its bid for world supremacy. This confrontation gave the people of the world a clear view of what was eventually emerging as the main contradiction in the world. This contradiction is between the ruling classes of the Soviet Union and the U.S.

Facts are stubborn things; during the war in Vietnam Johnson told us how we could have guns **and** butter. The liberals loved to regale us about how LBJ was good at home and bad abroad. During the Nixon years Dicky, speaking from his mansion in San Clemente, told us this wasn't possible, guns **and** butter. He spoke of "sacrifices" for the "American Way." But things grew steadily worse for the U.S. rulers. So the big guys pushed out the sleazy Nixon crowd who had begun to move in around the administration of LBJ. These newer bosses were from industries that grew up after World War II, and which had some independence from Wall St.

Now poor old Jerry is in the saddle, or Rockefeller's lap. One week he barks out about the soundness of the economy. Then several million workers are laid off. One week he talks of raising income taxes. The next week he asks to lower them. One week he yips about no raises in gas and oil prices because of the inflationary effect that would have. Then he asks that these prices be raised. One day he talks of no more war, then he claims maybe we will have to fight in Vietnam and the Mid-East. (Two wars in one week. He's going them all one better.)

But after all, how different is this pragmatism from those "leftists" and liberals who were telling us only a couple of years ago that if only the war in Vietnam would be over all the money spent there could be used to help us poor fellows at home. What a profound demonstration of knowledge about how this system operates! It almost appears that every time some force in the ruling class, liberal or conservative, or one of their lap dogs on the "left," tells us how things are getting better–they grow profoundly worse. One reason for their inability to explain very much or predict with any accuracy is that they always see things standing still, and have little understanding of why or when things will change.

In other words, in a milk bottle you might have made the proposition a few years ago that if the Vietnam War were over, concessions to U.S. workers could be made at home. After all, this would have had some similarity to what did happen after World War II. But the world is much different today. The U.S. is not the big boy on the block any more.

The U.S. bosses have to keep up with the German, Russian and Japanese bosses now. This means squeezing extra profits—profits lost overseas—out of the workers at home.

THE U.S. IS SLIPPING BADLY. IT HAS BEEN in decline for some time. But the manifestations of the decline aren't always apparent clearly or at once. There are certain signs along the way and then—boom: the "new" situation. In this particular case, a contracting economy and mass unemployment.

There are many reasons given for the inflation-depression. The bosses never tire of telling workers that it is our fault because we ask for too much pay. Then they throw in the "large" govern-

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko and Kissinger haggle over Mideast oil

ment spending. They hold us responsible for this because the examples of "waste" they point to have to do with spending for schools, hospitals, and other things necessary to maintain a minimal society. Naturally, waste spending for the military, tax breaks for the rich, etc. are essentially ignored. In the past, the depression of the thirties and the recessions of the fifties and sixties were solved in the traditional manner. Over-production was curtailed, and surpluses were sold off. Military spending was increased, which provided quick stimuli for the economy and strengthened the ability of the bosses to hold power at home and abroad. In this manner fuller production was restored, and if military spending was kept within certain limits, inflation was modest.

In the late fifties another important step was expanded significantly to stimulate production. This was the fantastic era of credit buying. Anything and everything could be bought on credit by almost anyone who could show some steady income. This spending is now in the hundreds of billions.

The credit spending bender is now coming home to roost. Huge purchases of consumer items are based on the ability to pay them off over a period of time. In this way the ordinary profit is maximized because the interest rate more often than not doubles and triples the original price. And when the item is paid off, it's just about finished so a new item must be bought. Not only can't unemployed people pay off their debt, but they can't buy a new item on credit. An economy which relies on credit buying grinds to a halt when a sufficient number of buyers are eliminated from the market.

But a newer and more fundamental aspect is at hand in the current situation. It is true to a great degree that higher prices are, in fact, due to the need of the producers to continually raise their prices to maintain profits—but this is not the entire story. The U.S. is in a state of decline. An important aspect of this decline is competition from new emerging bourgeoisies, like the Arabs, demanding more of a say over the price of resources they control. So, in this instance, energy in the form of oil is no longer cheap. U.S. bosses and other ruling classes have to pay through the nose for it. The Arab rulers, because of changed relationships of forces in the world, are now in a position to hold up the oil moguls for a bigger pay-off. The basis for this change of forces is the emergence of the Soviets as a power in the Mid-East. This development is due to the ability of the Soviets to challenge the military might of the U.S. and its stooge Israel, by arming the Arabs.

THE ABILITY OF THE U.S. RULING CLASS to gobble up raw materials around the world for virtually nothing has declined. Prices won't automatically drop drastically when inventories fall.

Therefore, consumption won't necessarily drastically rise. Control of the supply of raw materials is no longer solely in the hands of the U.S.

MILITARY SPENDING: A BOMB

Another factor not fully appreciated is that military spending will not play the same role in the economy as it did before and after World War II, or prior to the Korean War. During the Vietnamese War, the U.S. was pouring billions in "dead" capital into Vietnam. While the U.S. was spending untold billions in Vietnam, its competitors all over the world were not. In Germany, Japan, France and elsewhere they were investing the overwhelming bulk of their capital in new productive equipment. In many areas of the world their technique outdistanced the U.S. Nor did they have the balance of payment problems the U.S. has because of large scale military forces positioned all over the world.

Being the "policeman" of the world is very expensive. U.S. bosses are constantly bickering with their allies over this question. The answer they have generally received is "we thank you for protecting us from the Soviets, but we ain't going to pay for it."

If one capitalist nation is plowing huge sums of money into military hardware and others are spending money on modernization of new equipment and expansion, the Marxist concept of "dead" capital is fairly clear. True, profits can be made from the sale of a tank. But a new lathe can keep producing articles for a long time which can be sold for profits. One tank or plane can't produce another. When one country has the advantage over the other in turning out the means of production, as opposed to military production, the concept of dead capital becomes pretty clear. Military spending only seems extremely profitable when it is done with equanimity between major capitalist powers. Or, as in World War I and World War II, it requires developing new capital investments and new production technology.

At this stage of development military spending has turned into its opposite for U.S. bosses. The fundamental profit value involved in military spending is that it gives the U.S. (in this case) the ability to secure investments and to hold state power. In this sense it is necessary and profitable. However, if its competitors can avoid the same costs, they have an advantage. A store-owner who doesn't pay rent obviously has an advantage over a competitor who does. It appears that this advantage that some capitalist powers have had over the U.S. will be less important, as the bosses arm to the teeth to hold onto what they have, secure markets, fight for the source of supply and engage in combat with one another.

> Within the last few years, Japan has been plowing 30 per cent of its national income back into productive investments, West Germany nearly 20 per cent, while the United States, with all those missiles and tanks to maintain, has invested only 10.
>
> The conclusion, in Melman's words, is this: "The relatively poor condition of plant and equipment in many United States industries is no mystery. United States policy traded off renewal of the main productive assets of the economy"—transportation, manufacture, energy, you name it—"for the operation of the military system." **New York Times Book Review,** 1/26/75 (on a recent book by Seymour Melman).

Finally, a crucial factor involved for the bosses in determining the price of things is their ability to exploit workers. Workers have proven over the years that they are going to resist exploitation. The class struggle never ceases. Surely the workers of various sections of the world have made important strides forward since the Russian Revolution. The Russian Revolution and the emergence of the fledgling Soviet state in the hands of the working class taught the bosses one lesson they will never forget. Workers organized under the leadership of a communist party can win state power. They learned that a resolute communist party, armed with the science of Marxism-Leninism, can win. As a matter of fact the ruling class knows that it is no match for a united working class bent on revolution. The bosses fear communists more than death itself. Socialism means the death of the ruling class. Bosses understand that they can deal or handle all else. But they can't deal with revolution.

The early triumph of the Soviets made it possible for some workers all over the world to win concessions and hang on to them. Bosses' fears of workers moving to the left made them more skittish, to say the least, about dealing with the working class. This fact of life helps to explain the ability of workers in Europe and to some extent in Japan to close the gap between themselves and U.S. workers, and in some cases even surpass living standards of most U.S. workers. This is a fact of life U.S. bosses try to hide. Not many years ago it was fashionable for bosses to say that U.S. workers were the best paid, fed, etc. Therefore, they shouldn't complain too much. This is no longer the case.

Since the Russian Revolution there have been many fainter copies of the Russian Revolution. They are all ominous signs to the ruling class. The rulers understand that a serious move for power with no holds barred by the working class will do them in. Revolutionaries and radicals often underestimate this question. The ruling class does not. Many forces are imbued and limited by the same type of pragmatism which grips the bosses. Why not? We are all trained by the bosses. The rulers have imbued us with the notion that things will remain as they are. Given the current objective situation, if we can cut our umbilical cord from the ruling class, fasten onto Marxism-Leninism, the question of the seizure of state power is not as remote as it may appear.

ONE IMPORTANT WAY WORKERS ARE HELD back is to make it appear as if the ruling class is omnipotent. This is a sophisticated method. Take the energy or oil crisis. When it broke out, and to a lesser extent today, the answer provided

by the liberals and their Trotskyite and "Communist" lapdogs was that it was all a trick by the oil companies to raise their prices. Now, if that is true, then it denies our party's premise: THAT THE U.S. RULERS ARE IN A STATE OF RAPID DECLINE AND THAT THERE ARE MANY THINGS IN THE WORLD THAT THEY CAN'T HANDLE IN THE SAME WAY THEY USED TO, NOTABLY THE SUPPLY OF RAW MATERIALS, THE CONTROL OF THE WORKERS, AND COMPETITION WITH ALL OTHER MAJOR INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES. So, by raising the cry of "trick" it denies the actual state of things. It therefore denies that the solution to the problem is the destruction of the state apparatus.

(See previous articles in CHALLENGE-DESAFIO on other reasons for the current depression. These articles will be published in a forthcoming pamphlet.)

The ruling class faces the concrete problem of a decline in their rate of profit, not only as a result of the previous factors, but also because the workers are organized in many key industrial countries to sharpen the fight over the source of profits—surplus value.

Surplus value is determined by the varying ability of the ruling class to pay the workers only the minimum necessary to enable them to keep producing. If a worker works eight hours, but his wages are equal to the amount of value he created in four hours' work, the value produced in the remaining four hours is the source of the bosses' profit—**the surplus value.**

Profits are made only from the value added in production by workers' labors. Nothing gets produced in the absence of workers. Moreover, with all other things being equal, a worker who works longer hours will create more surplus value than one who works less hours at the same wage. Similarly, a worker who works, say, six hours and gets paid for eight will reduce the surplus value time extracted by the boss. (If the worker is still paid a wage equal to the value produced in four hours' work, the boss will only get surplus value equal to the value produced in only **two** remaining hours, thereby cutting surplus value in HALF from the amount produced in an 8-hour day.)

Thus, if through class struggle another hour or two is chopped off the entire work-day, profits are reduced. This is why the fight for the shorter work-day has always been the crucial fight of workers around the world.

Of course, it is true that bosses try to take back these workers' gains in many ways: raise prices, taxes, cut spending for social needs and services, etc. However, if this process goes too far, it becomes very dangerous for the bosses. Workers who can no longer win concessions or who can't maintain them once won tend to become angry and rebel. In any event, the results of workers winning the fight for the shorter work-day qualitatively sharpens the entire class struggle.

The Russian Revolution has been a model for workers' rebellion. And, of course, workers and others are going to improve this model. The ruling class, always fearful of the example of workers' revolution, attempts to maneuver away from pushing workers to the brink and past. The bosses cannot resolve a decisive contradiction: they can't control or organize their economic system so that it works rationally. The root cause of this is the withdrawal of surplus value—profits—from society.

Under socialism, surplus value is eliminated in the sense that there are no private profits; **the entire efforts of the workers are used to better society.** All value, over and above wages, is channeled back into the needs of a workers' society as a whole—the needs of workers and their families. This would range from new plants and means of production to social requirements like education, hospitals, etc. Since capitalism requires increasing private profits made from workers' efforts, it means increasing neglect of workers' needs. This creates an inevitable contradiction out of which the ruling class cannot maneuver.

Thus, it has been getting harder and harder for the bosses to oppress and rob all workers at will. This key problem, which is an integral part of the general demise of capitalism, has accentuated the falling rate of profit. This rate of profit, as Marx explained, is the crucial barometer of capitalist development.

> The falling rate of return on the nation's invested capital is perhaps a greater threat to future capital spending than the shortage of funds. The trend in return has been down since the mid-sixties. If it continues, companies will be reluctant to undertake a good deal of needed investment. By far the most pessimistic of the forecasts of an impending capital shortage comes from the economists at the New York Stock Exchange. Their most likely scenario, the one that the Exchange has widely publicized, envisions a $500 billion gap between business investment demands and the supply of saving in current dollars over the period of 1974-1985." (**Business Week,** Dec. 14, 1974)

The January 27th issue of the **New York Times** features on its front page a statement by Leonard Woodcock, the head of the U.A.W., who speaks as if he were chairman of the auto companies. He bitterly protests any suggestion to lower auto prices as a means of stimulating sales—hence employment. Woodcock says: "The nation's carmakers cannot lower prices because it would mean losing money . . . The auto companies' profit margins have been paper thin for more than a year. You can't cut prices if you are losing money on every car that is sold."

Obviously, if you have the same class outlook as the bosses this seemingly shocking statement from a union leader is, after all, not unreason-

able. Woodcock is basing his statement on a similar analysis made in this paper, but is drawing different conclusions.

To sum up: The ruling class in this country is caught in a bind. They can't control the price of raw materials any longer, are unable to dominate world markets because of sharp competition from "allies," and now from the Soviets. U.S. bosses are no longer able to ride roughshod over U.S. workers. As their crisis deepens, our answer is to **speed up the process** and crush them via the revolutionary route. Woodcock, liberals, and their herd of fakes on the "left" say, "Don't be too tough on them; the bosses have lots of trouble, let's try and save them."

THE U.S. RULING CLASS IS IN ITS DEATH throes. It is thrashing around to preserve its life. Internationally it is preparing for small wars and World War Three. At home it is intensifying its movement to fascism, as in Boston, to prevent workers from moving to the left and revolution. Additionally, it is consolidating its economic and political base in order to hold power longer.

Undoubtedly U.S. bosses would like to maneuver out of this deepening crisis short of World War. Nothing would please them more than to provoke a war between the Chinese and the Soviets, in which they could be neutral on the side of the Chinese. Such a war could knock out the Soviets as serious rivals. An unlimited Chinese army dumping ground could prove to be a bonanza. Perhaps local wars could be limited, such as wars in Southeast Asia, Latin America, or the Mid-East. However, whatever the various plans the U.S. rulers have, it's not likely they can succeed in the long run, given the nature of the world today. (In the next sections, the development of U.S. fascism and world war is discussed in detail.)

Our main job is to prepare for the period ahead. Either it is going to be a period of war between various ruling class forces in their particular interests, or it will be a period in which the working class turns imperialist war into civil war—revolution—to save itself and to realize a future. All indications, presently and historically, point to the latter. This is why a small party geared to this analysis can emerge as the focal point of the revolutionary forces. This has been the history of other revolutionary movements. It was their approach to war and fascism which enabled them to move ahead. They have shown us the way. We can learn from their errors to prevent reversals of power which have occurred in countries like China and Russia. But a revolutionary party cannot evaluate things only as they are, it must try to see ahead—to anticipate change. Those who see things only as they are, are finished in terms of making revolution. Marxist-Leninists base themselves on change.

II. CONTRADICTIONS ON A WORLD SCALE

It is useful to try to evaluate the relationship of forces in the world in order to anticipate developments. This should help us in developing strategy and tactics. This was especially helpful on the eve of full scale war in Vietnam. It enabled the party to play a more vigorous and vanguard role. It is important to try to ascertain

U.S. Marines train under desert conditions in preparation for Mideast war.

the main contradiction for this period. If we can more clearly see developments, our party can use all its past experiences and apply them more constructively to the period ahead.

In trying to evaluate the primary contradiction, we should agree on a few criteria in order to make a determination. In thinking about the main contradiction, we are trying to determine it for the **coming** period. The main contradiction in the long run is the **fight for power** by the working class. This implies socialist revolution. Hence, the battle between socialism and capitalism. For a time in the past this was the primary contradiction. But it has been temporarily superseded by other contradictions which exist simultaneously. Some are: the battle between the forces of national liberation and imperialism, the inter-imperialist rivalries, and now specifically—and seemingly new—the fight between the new and old imperialists, i.e., the revisionists. Generally, the primary contradiction amongst all those that simultaneously exist is that contradiction which has the **most** impact on the world **at a particular time and period.** This contradiction is always marked by a struggle for political, economic and military supremacy. A brief look at history might make this clear.

Prior to through half of World War I the main contradiction was between imperialist states, especially in Europe. The German ruling class was contending for world markets and power. Its main antagonists were the French and British. Later the U.S. ruling class came into this struggle fully committed against Germany. Obviously, World War I was the most profound development in the world. This fight for the redistribution of world markets was a gigantic fight resulting in tens of millions of casualties, mostly workers. However, prior to the war the class struggle was sharpening between workers and bosses. But even though workers were drawn into the war on the side of their particular ruling class, by the time the war was over the first socialist revolution was in process. As we know the workers took power in the new Soviet state, and the communist party of Lenin was the leader of revolutionary forces. So, in fact, we saw the primary contradiction change over a period of years from inter-imperialist rivalry to the struggle between different classes —the fight between socialism and capitalism.

BETWEEN WARS

From about 1919 to the end of the twenties, it was pretty clear that this was the main contradiction in the world. The imperialists were driven out of Russia by the Red Army. The White Army was crushed, and despite ups and downs, socialist construction and socialist redevelopment of society was going on.

This historic development took away one sixth of the earth from the imperialists. This was a shattering blow to them. Additionally, in this period workers all over the world looked to the new Soviet state as their own. They also looked to emulate it, as economic instability became more the rule of the capitalist world. The German economy was in a shambles. Germany had been stripped of its colonies at Versaille. Germany was forced to pay reparations and the cost of occupation. It was prevented from re-arming. Alsace-Lorraine was placed in the hands of France, while Danzig was named a free port, basically under Polish control.

The communist movement spread rapidly in Germany. Socialism was on the minds and in the feet of most German workers. Large communist movements sprang up in the rest of Europe.

Finally, the capitalist world was rocked when the U.S. had its major depression. Germany, which did start to make a little economic headway because of allied loans and concessions on reparation, etc., quickly hit bottom again. The German ruling class, as well as the international bourgeoisie, was afraid that Germany would be the next country to fall to the working class and its communist vanguard. In order to reverse this trend, some stood aside or in many cases encouraged and aided the German bosses to opt for fascism. Make no mistake about it, fascism, in this case Nazism, is a response to the inability of the ruling class to hold power through bourgeois democracy, and to ward off the threat of socialism.

In the U.S. workers were faced with massive unemployment. Over 40% of the workers were out of work. A giant organizing drive of industrial workers started. This drive was largely inspired and led by the Communist party. The development of the C.I.O. was the main fruit of this period.

U.S. bosses were deathly worried about the growth of communist forces in Europe-and now in their own backyard. The Roosevelt administration, which had been forced by U.S. workers into some concessions, showed its true colors. It declared an embargo on the Loyalist forces in the new democratic republic in Spain. The latter had come under siege internally by the "Five Insurgent Generals," led by the butcher Franco. The Hitler-Mussolini axis poured arms into Spain to help the fascists. The Loyalists were supported by the Spanish working class and by the new Soviet state. Workers the world over supported the cause of the Loyalists, despite their political weaknesses.

The question of which side you were on, or supported, in Spain was the touchstone of all questions in the world during that war. The bosses of the world basically supported the fascist Franco. Working class detachments from around the world were sent to aid the embattled Loyalists in order to stem the tide against the fascist butchers. There was the International Brigade from Europe, and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade from the U.S. (A significant sign of the times saw the Abraham Lincoln Brigade members forced to travel clandestinely to Spain because of Roosevelt's embargo.) The purchase and sale of arms to the Loyalists from the U.S. was prevented by the embargo. Roosevelt cloaked himself in the veil of "neutrality." But this "neutrality" was, in fact, a show of support for the fascists, inasmuch as they got all the weapons they needed from Italy and Germany. Thus, the U.S. bourgeoisie, despite its sweet talk, planted its class flag squarely on the side of Nazism.

THE SHORT REICH

So in Spain the focus of the world contradiction was sharp and clear—revolution vs. counter-revolution. But the term primary or main contradiction doesn't mean the **only** contradiction. The German ruling class, led by the Hitlerites, was having a field day. The U.S., French, and British made concession-trying to direct them eastward, to destroy Socialism – after concession to the Nazis. They betrayed every offer the Russians made to stop the Nazis.

Then Hitler & Co. got the bright idea that they could take all the marbles. Not only did the German ruling class think that they could accomplish their aim to "destroy Marxism," the "Drang nach Osten," (march to the east); they also believed they could take over their imperialist rivals as well. Hitler felt a quick victory over the Russians could pave the way to the defeat of Britain. This, he hoped, would lead to a passive, possibly Nazi U.S.

Thus the contradiction between imperialists came into sharper play. But the main aspect of World War II was the attempt by German imperialism to destroy workers' revolution in the Soviet Union. (This became sharper as the Allies dragged their heels in opening up the second front in the west, and the speed with which the U.S. and others shifted gears near the end of the war created the conditions for the "Cold War.")

It is not the purpose of this section to try to evaluate the tactics of the working class forces (see section IV) which in effect was to organize and fight like hell against the Nazis while making alliances with that section of the imperialists which was in sharp contradiction with the German imperialists. But for all intents and purposes the German dream of the Thousand Year Reich world domination came to an end in the first Battle for Moscow, and was finally destroyed in the battle of Stalingrad.

As the capitalist allies saw the ultimate triumph of Soviet forces, they developed a number of stalling tactics to weaken the Soviets. They delayed the "second front." (This was to be an early Allied landing in Western France in 1942; it wasn't launched until June 6, 1944, and then also because the Western capitalist rulers realized the Red Army could conceivably drive all the way through Germany and into France.) Instead, in 1942 and '43 they grabbed parts of Africa, invaded Sicily and then Italy. (Actually Churchill wanted to go even further East, through the Balkans, to beat the Red Army to Eastern Europe.) All this was to avoid a real "second front" which would draw Nazi troops away from the Eastern Front and force Hitler to fight a two-front war, considerably relieving the pressure on the Red Army.

They purposely omitted bombing major German industry which they owned anyway, and which they knew would be necessary in their long range struggle with the Soviets. Instead they feigned militancy by bombing German population centers. Bosses always figure lives are not nearly as important as factories. (By the way the Soviets rarely, if ever, bombed German population targets.) By the time the war ended, the U.S., French and British ruling classes were on better terms with their Nazi counter-part than with their Soviet "allies." So the cold-war scenario was drawn, and it only took Churchill's Fulton, Missouri speech about the "iron curtain" in 1946 to formalize it. The dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan was the opening gun in the Cold War—a warning to the Soviets of what was in store for them—rather than the "end" of the war against Japan. (See **Fear, War & the Bomb**, by P.M.S. Blackett, Chapter 10.)

Thus, the contradiction seemingly shifted back to socialism vs. capitalism. But several things were at play. By the mid-Fifties the Soviet state was turning into its opposite, so that the contradictions between Soviet rulers and U.S. rulers turned more and more into contradictions between imperialists. Soviet errors over the years finally came home to roost. French, Japanese, German and other capitalists were, from a historical point of view, rather quickly getting back on their feet. They were beginning to groan under the domination of U.S. imperialism. On the one hand, U.S. bosses had to help the recovery of their counter-parts in Japan and Europe in order to prevent socialist revolution. But this only intensified imperialist contradictions, enabling Western Europe and Japan to compete on more nearly even terms with U.S. bosses.

THE CHINESE EXAMPLE

ADDITIONALLY, AND MORE SIGNIFICANTLY, the Chinese revolution after World War II set the stage for the new period. This period of the sixties was marked by the battle for national liberation. The main focus of this era was to be in Vietnam. During World War II the Japanese were unable to complete their occupation of China. Beset by U.S. naval power, resistance in China by the revolutionary forces and threatened by full-scale Soviet military might, the Japanese imperialists were crushed. The revolutionary forces were then able to turn their full attention to Chiang Kai-shek and wipe out the counter-revolutionaries.

The successof the Chinese revolution was, of course, a victory for the world's workers. But even more so, it became a symbol and inspiration to all oppressed people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It proved that an industrially "backward" or even semi-feudal country could go socialist, that workers and oppressed people guided by Marxism-Leninism could take power. In addition, U.S. imperialism was exposed as the main enemy of the people of the world. U.S. military power was seen as the main obstacle people faced in their quest for liberation.

Given Chinese support, both politically and otherwise, many people moved militantly against U.S. bosses. This was true from Cuba to the Congo to Vietnam. Variations on the Chinese experience developed. In Cuba Marxism-Leninism was hidden from the workers and peasants until the middle-class leadership took power. In the Congo it was simply a case of national liberation,

Soviet soldiers defeat Nazis during World War II

or a shift from one imperialist to another. Such was the case in Algeria. In Vietnam, under the tutelage of the north Vietnamese, the scenario was supposed to be similar to the Chinese: from "New Democracy" to socialism.

The victory of the Chinese revolution was a danger signal to the U.S. imperialists. Over the years the U.S. had made steady progress in penetrating Asia, Africa, and especially Latin America. The U.S. bosses viewed the Pacific Ocean as another Great Lake. Generally speaking, the Japanese were their only serious contender. Even the development of Soviet naval strength didn't seem very ominous to the U.S. as a real rival in the Pacific. The defeat of the Japanese appeared to have left the U.S. as the only viable Pacific force. The U.S. was poised to move into the Asian continent and take over from all its old imperialist competitors. Absolute control of the Pacific gave logic to the U.S. bosses' perspective of world domination. The "American Century" was to replace the Thousand Year Reich.

Another danger signal to the bosses' dreams of Pacific domination was the development of a socialist North Korean state, backed by the Soviets and the Chinese. U.S. bosses, emboldened by their apparent strength, and guided by their aspirations of world domination, attacked North Korea in 1950. This was to serve several purposes: it was to wipe out North Korea and secure U.S. Asian flanks; it was a warning to the Soviets and the Chinese that the Truman Doctrine extended beyond Europe to the rest of the world (U.S. bosses were saying stop now or face the consequences); it was a warning to all people moving towards liberation that their efforts would be dealt with ruthlessly by U.S. bosses; and it was intended as a possible stepping stone to an attack on China. While the Korean War didn't assume the same significance as Vietnam, it set the stage, and proved some things about the ability of the U.S. bosses to achieve their goals.

The U.S. invasion of North Korea ultimately met with stiff Soviet military support for the North Koreans. This reached its apex with the introduction of Soviet air power and anti-aircraft weapons which, startlingly, virtually blew the U.S. air force out of the skies.

The Chinese made it clear that they would brook no aggression against their territory. When U.S. forces almost reached the Yalu river Chinese military forces (then called volunteers) intervened in large numbers and quickly crushed the U.S. Army. Morale sagged throughout the U.S. armed forces. The U.S. population was quickly rejecting the Korean war. And by the time Eisenhower was running for president he had to make his main platform plank ending the Korean War.

THE LESSONS SEEMED OBVIOUS ENOUGH.

The U.S. was not the only Pacific power. The Soviets clearly had their interests, and were not going to relinquish them. The Chinese weren't going to back off their revolution—and were going to encourage others, even if the Soviets were fast entering their counter-revolutionary stage. The dream of U.S. invincibility was not to be taken seriously.

But the only lesson U.S. bosses drew was that they made several military blunders: that they didn't bring enough forces to bear, and that they would have to adjust their tactics to take into account the development of Soviet imperialism as a possible conciliatory and sellout force.

Furthermore, in the fifties the Soviets had developed the atom bomb. During the Korean War General McArthur was given the option to use the A-bomb. But when this fact became known, U.S. allies quickly made it clear they would not accept its use. And the U.S. population also made their feelings clear on this point by their rejection of the war. This forced Truman to retreat. He finally removed McArthur from his Pacific command in what is now referred to as a real confrontation between sections of the ruling class.

Obviously, U.S. bosses were working within limits which they didn't fully comprehend. This brought them to the Vietnamese War.

Drawing on the success of the Chinese and Korean efforts, forces of national liberation were spurred on. The U.S. was indeed a "paper tiger," with teeth, but who could be forced to back off.

Forces of revolution gathered in south Vietnam as the objective situation deteriorated. U.S. bosses reacted violently, finally seeing this revolution as a real challenge to their Asian empire. More isolated than ever around the world, they began to move into Vietnam on a large scale. Driven by their various illusions of world domination, and racist myths that no oppressed people "could stand up to the Marines," etc., they were engulfed in People's War.

As we now know, the Vietnam war was generally a very costly affair for the U.S. bosses. This was true militarily, politically and economically. We in PLP also learned the different political lessons spelled out in Road to Revolution III (see **PL Magazine,** Vol. 8, No. 3). By the time the Vietnamese war ended, the relationship of forces in the world had shifted dramatically.

The U.S. rulers were no longer the sole economic, political and military supercolossus they thought they were. The U.S. was just another imperialist country, perhaps the strongest, but one with a lot of problems. On the other hand the Soviets emerged as its chief rival. Japan and Europe were greatly strengthened as industrial producers and exporters. (China assumed its place as a growing industrial power taking the imperialist road, no longer the center of world revolution and no longer the impetus behind national liberation. China still claims national liberation to be the primary contradiction in the world. This is now a hollow slogan tailored to meet China's needs for ties to so-called 'third world' reactionary leaders with whom she wants to curry favor.)

Perhaps it could be concluded that the Vietnamese war had the paradoxical aspects of being both the turning point for the development of U.S. imperialism, and for the development of socialism in China. By the end of the war in Vietnam it was clear that the U.S. had slipped badly as a world power. Despite massive intervention it couldn't defeat tiny north Vietnam and its allies in the south. And it had to rely on maneuvering by the Soviets to wiggle out. While the U.S. bosses had to expend huge sums and resources in Vietnam (this limited many economic endeavors by U.S. bosses, such as more capital investments), the Soviets made modest military commitments and didn't have to use one solitary soldier to keep their hold over the area.

On the other hand, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) which had developed in China during the Vietnamese war came to an end. The left forces were defeated. The right took power behind the fig leaf of Mao. Soon, virtually all the "enemies and devils" which had been removed as "power-holders" during the GPCR were back in power, except Liu Shao-chi.

The defeat of the GPCR was the final turning point, the demise of the previous international communist movement. Obviously, the Mao leadership was afraid of the Vietnamese implications. They were afraid that real revolutionary efforts would provoke the U.S. into a war against them. And they probably thought that at that point the Soviet Union and the U.S. would join forces in such a war. Naturally, it was only a short step to the conclusion that stimulating or supporting revolutionary action anywhere might result in the same thing. Thus they finally evolved a strategy of making a detente with the U.S. for the purpose of splitting the Soviet Union and U.S. And they deduced from a national-interest viewpoint that the Soviet Union was the main danger because of its proximity to China. They saw the obvious decline of U.S. imperialism and the ascendancy of Soviet imperialism. (The falseness of this type of politics is spelled out in Road to Revolution III.)

THREE LESSONS

Here, it might be useful to try to review lessons from this section. Many of these points are not fully dealt with in Road to Revolution III:

1. The primary contradiction changes constantly based on the class struggle. Inter-imperialist rivalry can quickly give way to the contradiction between revolution and counter-revolution. One has to be constantly alert to all the contradictions which exist in order to make long range plans. Obviously, the revolutionary process isn't a simple upward and onward development (except in the long-range historical sense).

2. It seems that during war between imperialists the workers, oppressed people and revolutionary forces can make their largest strides. This has been true since the Paris Commune, in which the setting was the war between France and Germany. The First World War gave rise to the Russian Revolution. The Second World War gave

rise to the Chinese Revolution. And the Korean and the Vietnamese Wars gave impetus to wars of National Liberation as distinct from workers' revolution. The reason this lesson is vital is because many revolutionaries are afraid of war. The Second World War intensified Soviet nationalism and protectionism. The horrors of war (not in any sense to be glib) weakened much revolutionary resolve amongst the workers as well as their leaders. Soviet policy is now obviously tailored to preventing revolution. **Thus, war can give rise to revisionism and pacifism.** It seems that the Chinese aren't too anxious to push revolution because this would encourage U.S. and Soviet retaliation. And finally, atomic weaponry has weakened the will of many revolutionaries. The fear of "world holocaust" has deep roots amongst all people. When faced with this dire possibility revolutionaries may tend to back off.

So the question of war is two-sided. **OUR MAIN LESSON IS NOT TO BE AFRAID OF WAR. WAR IS A SERIOUS BUSINESS. BUT WAR MEANS THE WEAKENING OF A PARTICULAR IMPERIALIST AND A CHANCE FOR WORKERS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IMPERIALIST CONTRADICTIONS.** One of the differences in the future is that in the next World War, and there is every reason to believe there will be one, the entire imperialist system, from the revisionist countries to the old-line imperialist countries, will go.

3. By now we should be clear that fascism and war are inevitable under capitalism/imperialism. Just as revolutionary progress can soar under conditions of war, so too can revolutionary progress advance under fascism. This was particularly true during World War II. But again it is two-sided. In this country the revisionists, pacifists and liberals are always warning of the fascist consequences. Their strategy of fighting it is to give in to all the excesses and brutalities of bourgeois democracy. We are constantly told of and shown the horrors of the fascist alternatives. Naturally, it's important to know these things, but to be overly frightened of fascism means political impotence.

World's workers fight fascism

We should realize that fascism isn't something we bring. It is inevitable under capitalism—as its political and economic systems falter and collapse, as the people rebel against all the inequities of these systems. We should warn of war and fascism. We should organize against them. We should create United Fronts, without the ruling class, not for the purposes of acquiescing to the capitalist system, but for winning working class power. War and fascism are inevitable under imperialism. The only way to stop them is to do away with imperialism.

Neither war nor fascism necessarily leads to advance. Advance by the working class requires conscious political leadership. Revolution does not happen spontaneously. Nor do communists gleefully sit back and rub their hands saying, "Gee, war and fascism—good; now we can make some progress." Communists take the lead in exposing the war-makers. They take the lead in opposing fascism. They take the lead in smashing those who visit these horrors on the working class. But communists stop being communists if they capitulate to pacifist or opportunist notions in order to "prevent" war and fascism.

IMPERIALIST 'FREE-FOR-ALL'

In this current period we are generally involved in, and witnessing, the following contradictions: The imperialist world is generally divided into five spheres. One is the Soviet bloc plus those countries in which it has growing or dominant control—India, Cuba, Vietnam, Indonesia and a few others. Then there is the U.S. bloc. This includes almost all of Latin-America, Canada, Pakistan, much of the Middle East (although it is in this area that the Soviet-U.S. rivalry is sharpest), and others. Then there is Europe. This area seems to be being picked over by the U.S. and the Soviet Union with the outcome still in doubt. You might say that the Soviets are picking up ground, inasmuch as they had no place to go but up in this area.

Japan has a unique situation. It has become the third most important producing nation in the world. It has a very small military force. At this point it is primarily tied to U.S. imperialism, much like Europe. But, like Europe, it is casting around to secure independence. Its main outlook now seems to be in developing Soviet trade. But it is also casting a furtive eye on China. Japan has much in common with European countries. It is not self-sufficient. It must develop alliances in order to survive.

Then there is China. China has a vast potential in every way—manpower, markets and resources. Its main limitation at the moment is that it is industrially backward compared to the other imperialist countries. Its main enemy has now become the Soviets and its main ally has seemingly become the U.S. If there are no dramatic changes in the class struggle during the next twenty years,

it seems like the alliances in the world which will predominate will be between China and the U.S. on the one hand and everyone else on the other. Of course this could all get knocked into a cocked hat if there is a revolutionary upsurge.

WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

Naturally, within all this inter-imperialist rivalry there are numerous other contradictions, in addition to the main one among the imperialist states themselves. There is the contradiction between the newly emerging ruling classes and the old. The sharpest of these is in the Middle East. A recent **CHALLENGE-DESAFIO** article goes into this at length. However, we should underline the fact that U.S. oil companies no longer have the sole voice in this area. The Arab overlords have their aspirations. And it seems that they are in the process (a long-range one, to be sure) of developing the Mid-East into an industrial producer. This would be based on a combination of oil capital and Egyptian labor. Thus, these forces constantly play off the U.S. and Soviet imperialists for their own ends. This explains the constant shifting from pro-Soviet to anti-Soviet positions. The touchstone of this process is the U.S. policy on Israel. As we know, in the past the U.S. policy was based on Israeli fascism. The recent Mid-East war changed this. Now the U.S. is breaking with this policy and getting more secure in its relations with the Arab oil chiefs. It may even follow that there will be some kind of Israeli-Soviet detente or alliance. Nor does this rule out further war between the Arabs and Israelis. But, for the moment, the Israeli fortunes are on the wane, sacrificed on the altars of U.S. imperialism.

Another similar situation, but not quite so intense, exists in Latin America—particularly in Brazil and Argentina. Brazil is a large country with vast resources. It relies on U.S. investments, but is too large a plum for the national bourgeoisie to give away forever. At some point in its development this will terminate. In Argentina there is a sharper battle between European and U.S. capital. The U.S. will win out in the short run because it is much more self-sufficient, especially in oil, than Europe. However, the national bourgeoisie will eventually come more into sharper conflict with U.S. bosses.

While these various groupings of bosses scramble with one another for the world's markets and resources, older capitalist economies are in decline. On the one hand the classical Marxist explanation of over-production and the falling rate of profits is in force. The rate of profits is bound to fall in the industrial countries as it gets harder and harder for them to completely control and exploit all countries at will. Today there are more imperialist countries than ever. China, the Soviet Union and some of the newer emerging countries join the old lists of the U.S., Europe and Japan. This intensifies competition, limiting exploitation and profits.

Other countries are no longer the simple victims of imperialism. All national bourgeoisies want a bigger piece of the pie. And they can all play the game of Russia-to-U.S.-to-Japan. (The political version of from "Tinkers to Evans to Chance.") This in turn spirals prices upward and generally worsens conditions; the ruling classes cut services as profits fall. This sharpens class struggle.

One of the main problems generally is that the international communist movement has been wiped out by its own internal weaknesses—its capitulation to the "national interest" and thus to the private profit system. A new movement must be built. Workers cannot contest for power without a vanguard party.

The other side of this process is that the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat has not been wasted on the workers of the world. One indication of this is the way in which the revisionists still must pay lip service to Marxism-Leninism in order to hold power. This is still true even in the Soviet Union and certainly in China. Recently, the liberal reforms in Portugal allowed for a May Day. One million people turned out for it—one eighth of the country's population!

Then there is the general anti-imperialist consciousness built during decades of various levels of anti-imperialism. For example, in the U.S. there was the Vietnam experience. By the war's end, a good many people understood the war was not in their interest, but in the interest of a small ruling class. A good deal of the sentiment was clearly pacifist. But make no mistake about it—U.S. bosses' hands are momentarily stayed by anti-imperialism. These lessons are carried on to the next generation. While much of this feeling is routed into cynicism, or "you-can't-change-things" philosophy, it can still be a positive force on which to build.

The same is true of anti-racism. While the bosses are pushing racist ideas and practices harder, there is more opposition to racism than ever. This is true of minority people, and the logic of the class struggle is eroding many racist myths among white workers, too. No workers can win while divided from their fellow workers. While naturally anti-racism and anti-imperialism are not yet dominant, counter-trends strongly exist. People's consciousness is more than sufficient to build on. These are strong building blocks towards the socialist development.

WAR BEFORE REVOLUTION

Also within the newer industrial countries, particularly in Latin America, the newer working classes are fighting for what is theirs. So the class struggle grows as imperialism declines. But at the moment the thing which predominates as the primary contradiction in the world is inter-imperialist rivalry. This is true even though in a subjective way we would prefer to believe otherwise (i.e., that the class struggle of workers vs. bosses is primary). But when faced with the question: in what area is the working class in, or close to, a contest for power?—the answer is none. The more likely occurrence is war between

the Soviet Union and the U.S., before a workers' challenge for power develops.

What makes this particularly the case is the strength of revisionism. In Western Europe, the Soviet Union and in China, revisionism has momentarily won out. The working class will have to refute and defeat revisionism before it can win. In the meantime the revisionists in China and the Soviet Union are using a left cover to build imperialism. And for the most part, from what one can see, they are getting away with it for the moment.

The current period once again has many similarities to the period preceding World War I. There is mounting inter-imperialist rivalry coupled with collusion. The air abounds with the words of peace. Nixon travels to Peking and Moscow for detente. But the bombs are being built more profusely than ever. There is sharpening class struggle as workers and the oppressed people are being forced to pay the price of capitalist crisis. There is a fledgling communist movement in our country and elsewhere. It seems weak but it is inherently strong, because it is rooted in history and based on current reality. As the imperialists go at one another's throats, the workers and their vanguard can get stronger. The differences are that there are atomic weapons and imperialist states that call themselves communists. But the laws of Marxism-Leninism are in full force. War between bosses no matter what they call themselves is inevitable. (Remember Hitler called his movement 'national socialism.' This was an attempt by the German ruling class to mask its real policies with a left cover. This was necessary because of the consciousness of German workers.)

At this moment in history the bosses are restraining themselves from war. They know that atomic war would be very costly and open the way for their demise. But a seriously threatened ruling class, either by its own efforts or through one of its client states, would be forced to opt for war. As inter-imperialist rivalry grows sharper collusion will give way to antagonism.

The highest level of collusion between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. was achieved at the Glassboro conference in N.J. in 1967. There, the "Spheres of Influence" policy was formalized. For a number of years collusion between the "superpowers" was the primary aspect of their relationship.

However, as we have pointed out from time to time, there were built-in antagonisms inherent in their relationship. These antagonisms are coming to the front. They are sharpening. The Mid-East crisis, the Cyprus War, and the intensifying general economic and political rivalry bear this out. These Inter-Imperialist contradictions will lead to war. Collusion may still be the primary aspect of the relation, but the gap between collusion and antagonism is rapidly closing.

When war does come, its intensity and length will be determined by the strength of the existing communist movements which would have the strength to disarm the warmakers. Thus, building a communist movement is the only salvation for the working class, its only chance for life. Remember, between World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, the ruling cliques killed over 100,000,000 people. They wounded around 500,000,000. For those who think they wouldn't use atomic weaponry for profits, think again.

There was a very short transition from the end of World War I to the Russian Revolution, in which the main contradiction shifted from inter-inperialist rivalry to socialism vs. capitalism. We believe the contradiction can be changed from inter-imperialist rivalry to socialism vs. capitalism again as the new war develops.

III. FIGHTING FASCISM

During the coming period, building our Party is crucial. This seemingly obvious statement is not fully understood by any of us. The working class can win only if it has a powerful communist party. Only a working class led by a strong communist party can defeat fascism. Only a growing vigorous communist party can place workers on the offensive against racism and for major economic and political gains. The question of the Party is central to the life of the working class.

For their part, the imperialists cannot develop fascism and war without winning at least a significant section of the working class to part or all of their reactionary outlook.

The imperialists are now trying hard to erase all anti-imperialist consciousness from the minds of U.S. workers. To the degree they fail, this limits their possible action against rival imperialists.

In this period of intense competition and sharp class struggle, the bosses will try to shift the blame for workers' deteriorating condition away from themselves and onto others. At first, it will be to minority workers and the so-called "illegals"; then to workers in other countries who are supposedly willing to work for less pay. And finally they will try to combine all these into a racist jingoistic patriotism in order to try to convince workers here to fight against other countries' workers.

The biggest obstacle to this ruling class plan is our Party and our line of uniting workers of all nations in a common struggle against all the imperialists.

This is not a hollow threat. During World War I, when the imperialists tried to draw workers onto their side, Lenin fought this nationalist scheme. Inside the Russian revolutionary movement, he exposed one after another "left" leader who made a case for Russian workers to shoulder arms against German workers, and the Bolsheviks exposed similar fakers in other countries as well. Unity under the bosses, for all intents and purposes, was the nationalist slogan during that period. The terms motherland and fatherland were trumpeted from the big business press around the world (sad to say, they continued to be used by the Soviets and Chinese even at their best).

But the little Bolshevik Party, with its bold line

of international workers' unity, proved to be the downfall of the Russian Empire and turned the whole world situation around.

Today, the same imperialist/nationalist propaganda machine is being cranked up again. We must alert all workers against being drawn into the bosses' war. We must try to win workers to take power from the bosses, using the enemy's weaknesses, economic and military, which are often most apparent during wartime.

As the strength of the working class grows, as our Party grows, and as the bosses' contradictions deepen and multiply, we must be prepared for fascism.

Many people have a lot of questions about fascism. For example, how do you identify it? As often as not, it is dressed in a business suit rather than jackboots and a swastika armband (more on this point below).

But regardless of its dress, **there is a mass fascist movement growing in our country today.** It is virile. It is not the usual bunch of freaks. This movement is well-heeled. It has an open and a covert leadership. It is backed by the bosses in order to prevent workers from moving to the left. And it diverts workers and others from the burning issues of jobs, living conditions and the need to fight back against a new boss-controlled war.

WHY FASCISM?

THE U.S. RULING CLASS' RATE OF PROFIT (and often the profits themselves) is declining. They no longer control the world economically or militarily. The Vietnam war bled them economically into near bankruptcy and showed the world's rebellious workers that the U.S. military machine could be beaten.

They are faced with four immediate problems:

(1) • How to streamline their economy at home to compete better in the international marketplace (this means controlling those U.S. companies which are trying to turn a quick buck by private deals with the Arabs and others, often at the expense of the "national interest" of the U.S. capitalist class).

(2) • How to keep workers at home from rebelling as the rulers try to squeeze more profits (lost around the world) out of them.

Study Urges Check on Oil Companies to Guard National Interest

FEBRUARY 11, 1975

By EDWARD COWAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10—A $300,000 federally financed study has concluded that the Government should adopt new techniques to make certain that the behavior of the international oil companies "will be consistent with the national interests of the United States."

The study by a Los Angeles lawyer, Robert B. Krueger, and his associates found that customary government-oil industry relationships, including those now in effect, "do not assure" that national interests will be protected by the companies. concluded, "there appears to be

Accordingly, Mr. Krueger a need for monitoring and for the establishement of a sufficient number of control points within the system to insure that the national interests are independently protected by the United States Government."

The Krueger study was commissioned by the Federal Energy Administration nearly a yea ago in the wake of the Government's difficulties in handling the 1973-74 Arab states' embargo on oil shipments to this country. Although still not published—the agency is about to release it—the study had reportedly caused uneasiness in the oil industry and in the State Department.

Mr. Krueger's text runs to almost 400 pages, with about 400 pages of appendixes. A 122 page summary has been circulating among Federal agencies, a copy of which was obtained by The New York Times .

The study said that the Government, in establishing a new role for itself in international petroleum affairs, needed the power to approve or disapprove "transactions where they may affect significant aspects of the national interest." That was a reference to transactions between companies or between a company and a foreign-oil exporting government, such as Libya or Iran.

The study cautioned that "such massive power" could be abused, to the detriment of oil companies and the nation. Therefore, it said, "an entity with the stature and independence of the Federal Reserve Board, for example, would be necessary."

It suggested that other approaches might also be useful, including greater disclosure to the Government and public of information about what the international oil companies pay for oil, continued cooperation among consumer countries and a continuing, long-term dialogue between consumer and producer countries.

After Setting Dispute

However, the usefulness of all these approaches, the study warned, is subject to a "major qualification." "It is very unlikely that any effective progress can be made in dealing with the major producer countries until the ongoing Arab-Israeli dispute has been settled," it said.

The idea of greater government "monitoring" of the international oil companies has already found widespread support in Congress, notably among moderates and liberals. However, some of the other Krueger study findings go against the general liberal view.

"It is clear beyond any doubt that the companies benefited" from the oil price increase of 1973-74, the report said, "but it serves no purpose to perpetuate the myth that they brought it about. They did not and do not have the power to cause such an event. The producer countries have that power and

• How to prepare for military aggression against "uncooperative" newly-rich ruling classes in such areas as the Mid-East, and eventually a military confrontation with their chief rivals—the Russian capitalists.

• How to whip up a new patriotic fervor ("Deutchland Über Alles") so that masses of people can be conned into supporting their policies, including fighting a war against rebelling workers and peasants in some other country, or within our own country. (Right now, after Vietnam, they would have trouble getting an army up to fight anyone anywhere.)

Fascism is the obvious solution to all these problems for the U.S. ruling class. And while some of them may have some qualms (the "democratic processes" are very useful, if only to fool people about what's really happening), they are moving fairly rapidly in this direction.

The enemy must be some group which can be made to appear as a threat to the majority of U.S. workers (some group **besides** the U.S. bosses, that is). That means the racial minorities—the black people, immigrants, "foreigners," Jews. (The **N.Y. Times** on 2/6/75 reports that in predominantly white Rosedale, N.Y., "four black families have reported incidents and a cross was burned on the lawn in front of a Jewish family's home.")

The campaign has begun—the hysteria over "illegal aliens" who are supposedly "taking our jobs" (as if one's nationality should now determine who is to eat and who is to starve) has become nation-wide.

But the center of the fascist movement today is in Boston, Massachusetts and like other fascist movements it is organized around the question of racism! In this instance, it is against the black population.

In the instance of the raids carried out throughout the country against foreign born workers, the bosses use the machinery of the State itself, the Immigration Department, to carry out fascist activities.

FASCISM GROWS OUT OF RACIST IDEAS

The way this movement got started goes something like this:

Many racist theorists are located in the large universities. The center of the university system in our country is in Boston. Harvard University is the main center of ruling class education. Therefore, it was no accident that one of the leaders of the racist wolfpack was Harvard Professor Richard Herrnstein.

The gist of the racist theories runs along these lines: Minority people and all workers are born inferior to the offspring of the middle and upper classes. Therefore, they are dumb, stupid, and animal-like. (Probably one of the most hysterical pieces suggesting genetic inferiority was published in the January 19, 1974 issue of the **New York Times Magazine**.)

The logical conclusion to this nazi line is that minorities and other workers "don't need" education, food or jobs. Herrnstein and others went as far as saying that unemployment was a question of genetics. In other words, unemployment has nothing to do with bosses and their racist system. Unemployment, they claim, is an inherited characteristic, like the color of your eyes.

The cultural media, from the press to TV, push all the aspects of these nazi myths. So when the bosses in Boston, who are connected to bosses all over via the Kennedys and other ruling-class representatives, cooked up the plan of busing, they knew that a racist movement could be organized around it.

They created the climate for this racist movement by fostering racist ideas and actions. Their lap dogs on the right, like Boston's Louise Day Hicks and John Kerrigan, were ready to supply the open leadership and organizational muscle. Families of policemen and other petty city bureaucrats could be pushed to create the mass base for the fascist movement.

THE BOSSES ENCOURAGE FASCISM

Obviously if the liberal leadership in Boston, centered around the same Kennedy family, were really interested in preventing racist terror and violence against black children, they could have prevented it by police action (not to mention a mass anti-racist educational campaign). However, they cooked up the busing plan knowing full well the organized fascist response that would result.

The police and army are under their control, and they use just enough police pressure to keep the racists within certain bounds, but not enough force to crush it. Its open leaders, like Hicks and Kerrigan, are allowed to run around uttering the vilest racial slanders. And, of course, the racist professors at large institutions like Harvard are still grinding out Hitlerite myths of racial superiority.

One might still ask what makes the fascist movement in Boston special. **First, the racist movement there is rather large,** given the size of movements these days. On varying occasions, they have gotten about five thousand people on the streets. **Second, it is violent.** At this point it is not openly armed. But this racist movement, which has already lasted over a year, violently attacks black children—and adults—while smiling police stand around and watch.

Recently, the Nazi White People's Party issued material in Boston claiming leadership of this movement and that the police were sympathetic to them. We don't believe this movement needs the leadership of these crazies; it already has plenty of able nazis on hand who are so-called legitimate bourgeois leaders. However, based on eyewitness accounts, the police generally look favorably on the Nazis. The police and the Nazis have identical points of view, so those who call for more police and army power really don't understand the role of the police and the bosses' government.

Thus, the ruling class has set off a racist movement which is well organized and violent. President Ford has openly sympathized with it. It is

organized around the line of the liberal racist theorists who operate out of Harvard. At the moment, the main purpose of the movement is to split the working class and prevent it from uniting against the bosses' assault on working people.

Workers today, more than ever, need to unify to fight for jobs. Bosses realize that mass unemployment produces dangers for them, so they develop schemes to prevent workers from acting in unison for their own interests. **In the long run, the bosses are going to opt for full-scale fascism as their problems at home and abroad intensify,** seriously threatening their rule. Thus, they start their fascist activities, not **when** they are defeated, but **to prevent that moment from arriving.** The fascist movement is pushed harder now, while their system still has some life left.

Mass terror against sections of the working class is one important aspect of the fascist development. This is what is now going on in Boston. We cannot sit back and think that this is just another bad thing we have to suffer. Or, "It can't happen in our city." Boston is the tryout camp for this movement. Bosses will learn lessons from this and try it elsewhere. Mass lynch mobs roaming the large cities of our country is in the plans of the rulers.

To date, our party and others, in groups like the Committee Against Racism (CAR), have been fighting hard against the manifestations of racism in Boston. But the fight against racism must be sharply increased to give the fascist scum the beating they deserve.

RACISM: FIGHT IT OR JOIN IT

Racism and fascism are two rungs on the same rotten ladder. Racism, which leads to fascism, affects everyone. The attack against black workers and their families in Boston is an attack against all. Its purpose is to stop all workers from fighting the bosses. The lessons of Germany must never be forgotten. Hundreds of millions of workers—in every corner of the world—were casualties in World War II. But workers proved they could unite and defeat Hitlerism.

It may be that if the German Communist Party had fought more sharply—and earlier—against the fascists, and even before them against the racist anti-Semitism which was widespread around the country, the world would be different today.

Historical Monday morning quarterbacking doesn't prove much. But we have two concrete examples from our own Party's recent experience which make the same point:

Last year in San Francisco (which might almost be called the Boston of the West Coast) the ruling class and their press whipped up tremendous racist hysteria over the so-called "Zebra killings" in which, allegedly, black gangs were murdering innocent white people on the streets. The whole thing was a complete fabrication. But the headlines screamed, many white people were frightened, gun stores sold lots of guns, many black people were frightened, and the police started a Gestapo-style stop-and-search campaign against virtually every black man on the streets.

Our Party took to the streets with leaflets and with demonstrations to protest this racism. At first we were the only ones out there. (Many people were afraid to go out at all.) But we were bold, and loud, and persistent—even picketing the racist Mayor's house on a Sunday. We were undeterred by the hostile or frightened remarks we got at first. And eventually the tide turned, more and more joined the protests, and the fascists' trial balloon was burst.

In Boston, on the other hand, when the ruling class started a hysterical racist press campaign —around the same time—because of some alleged killing of a white woman by a group of black people, the leaders of our Party there at that time reacted in fear. When their leaflets were met by hostile remarks, when one of their homes was picketed by the racists, they turned and ran. They developed a "new" theory that this is not the time for bold action but rather for ideological study and discussion. Needless to say, they no longer are in our Party nor exist as a political force. (In contrast, our present Party group was out on the streets last Fall, on the very first day of the busing operation, battling racists.) But the fascists in Boston have made gains.

Let us make no mistake about it. Standing up to racism is not always easy. Ask any black man or woman whose family tree is drenched with the blood of parents and grandparents, and on and on.

Especially today, as millions of working people suddenly find themselves non-working people, and look around for someone to blame, as the big business press whips up racist movements against black people, immigrants and others, many people are going to be influenced.

But communists are not straws in the gallup-poll winds. And you can't beat racism by running away from it. If you run, you join the racists, and—more serious—you leave the door wide open for the fascists. You beat racism only by standing up to it (as our Party is doing today in Boston), and you win others to join the fight only as you fight.

GREY FLANNEL (LIBERAL) FASCISM

As we said earlier, fascism does not always wear a swastika armband. As the U.S. imperialists find themselves in more and more desperate trouble, they will try to come up with a way of winning working people **voluntarily** to support them in their wars abroad and **voluntarily** to give up their living conditions at home.

For that they need a clean-cut image, a nice-but-firm guy, a sales pitch that tells people not to ask for themselves but to give more and more and more "for their country." Sound familiar?

Yes, the Kennedy bandwagon (or any reasonable facsimile they can glue together) might well be the vehicle for fascism to come to the U.S. Calling forth patriotic slogans to "make America America again," Kennedy or some imitator might very well declare that any group of workers who refuses to give up his paid holidays for the "na-

LA cops study crowd control, fear food riots

LOS ANGELES — (AP) — Los Angeles Police Chief Ed Davis has launched a major crowd control training program among his officers because of concern over possible food riots in a depressed economy. Cmdr. Frank Brittell says, "Frankly, I'm afraid of food riots . . . We've tried to analyze it, but it's a little different because the guy across the line from you that you're opposing is your neighbor, or your brother."

Brittell said in an interview yesterday that more than 500 police supervisors have undergone extensive training on civil disturbances.

The supervisors are in turn instructing line officers and more seminars for higher officers are planned, said Brittell, who is in charge of the program.

He stressed that the 7,200-member department is neither predicting nor expecting food riots. He said part of the reason for the training is that "it's been a long time since we've had any problems and we're trying to bring back our expertise.

"A lot of the officers on the streets now weren't here during the 1965 Watts riots; there's been a tremendous change in personnel and we're trying to update our material."

The Miami News, Jan. 23, 1975

Welfare Unrest Grows For Recession Victims

By A. H. RASKIN

Unemployment insurance has become the country's biggest growth industry, a somber measure of the severity of the worst business slump since the Great Depression.

With a million new jobless persons registering for benefits in a single week and with two brand-new supplemental programs about to start making payments, the Federal-state insurance system is expected to pump $17-billion into the spending stream this year, triple the pre-recession flow.

Yet even this huge cushion for the living standards of those jolted out of their jobs and the additional support provided by many labor-management agreements are proving inadequate to shield thousands of workers and their families against what many have long regarded as the ultimate indignity, the necessity for going on welfare.

The humiliations that millions of relief recipients in New York and other metropolitan centers have learned to live with come as such a shock to many recession victims that union officials and welfare authorities alike fear an explosion if the rolls keep growing.

"Those who have been on welfare for a long time become rigorized to the slowness of bureaucracy," says James A. Dumpson, New York City's Human Resources Administrator. "Many now coming to us for the first time start with disdain for welfare. They are full of anger at the long delays in establishing eligibility, at the need for filling out the 12-page application form the state won't let us change."

Under orders from City Hall to cut his administrative staff by 700 just when this new flood of applicants is engulfing the welfare offices, Mr. Dumpson foresees social unrest here and elsewhere akin to that which engendered "Coxey's army" — a populist march on Washington for economic reform in 1894.

"We are likely to see the militant tactics of the old National Welfare Rights Organization revived by a quite different group," warns the city relief chief.

The New York Times, Jan 23, 1975

tion's good" is unpatriotic and dangerous and subversive and maybe even in league with the Russians or Japanese.

Make no mistake about it: The grey flannel fascists need terror just as much as the swastika fascists to enforce their rule. The U.S. ruling class is not only in an economic crisis—it is in a political crisis. The bosses are deeply worried about the possibility of worker rebellions. They wake up sweating from nightmares about what almost happened in the thirties when millions of unemployed workers threatened the system.

The grey flannel fascists will do their best to sway the masses of workers to work longer hours for less pay voluntarily (for the "national interest"), but when that fails—as it must fail!—their silver tongues will slide over and they will show their fangs. They will be as ruthless as any storm-troopers in trying to crush resistance.

Don't forget it was Bobby Kennedy who began implementing the anti-communist McCarran Act, it was his brother Jack who sponsored the anti-labor Kennedy-Landrum-Griffith Act, and then there was the Bay of Pigs, and letting the Birmingham murderers of four black children get away scot free.

The Kennedy types are watching the current fascist movement very closely to try to see how far people can be pushed. And when they make their move—if indeed fascism comes in its grey-flannel uniform this time—they will keep the Boston racist mobs in the wings, ready to mobilize if they are needed.

TO FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM IS TO FIGHT RACISM

Already, as reported in recent issues of **Challenge-Desafio**, many forces in Boston are coming forward and uniting to fight back. Many more forces will enter the fray. The bosses can be driven back all along the line. Ultimately, workers and their allies will wipe the fascists and those who spawn them off the face of the earth.

The fight of workers for socialism—the fight to seize state power and run this country for our class, the fight against bosses' control and their racist terror methods of rule—must be fought now.

We cannot wait for the gas ovens and crematoria to start up.

Again we see the Party's role—and building the Party—as the key task if we are serious about defeating fascism.

As we recruit to the Party, and as we organize and join others in bold working class action, we must simultaneously strengthen our understanding of communist politics and overcome some important weaknesses.

FOUR "ISMS" OF FASCISM

The internal fascist development will depend largely on four political questions—and how much the ruling class can spread them among the working class. Without these four props, fascism hasn't got a leg to stand on. We must fight these four "isms" among our fellow workers and students, and, first of all, within our own Party.

- The first is racism. As stated, the first barrage of the ruling class will be (already is) aimed at minority workers and foreign-born workers as the main targets. They are the traditional scapegoats. To the degree racist ideas and practices are exposed and repelled, and to the degree the working class is united, to that degree will the working class be able to give a good account of itself in the face of fascist attacks.

Within our Party, we must root out the tendency to be casual about racism—"ho-hum, another racist professor or another racist expulsion or another case of discrimination on the job." No! The next step is, "ho-hum, another lynching, another gas-chamber." Every effort of every member of our Party must be directed towards winning people away from racist attitudes and towards destroying racism. Anything less makes us "part of the problem."

- The second is pacifism. In our Party and in our class, there is a great deal of pacifism. We tend to shy away from violence, or situations where violence is inherent—even, unfortunately, from strikes.

Violence is a daily state of affairs, on and off the job, for millions of workers. Industrial accidents, diseases, speed-up, layoffs, conditions in which workers (even more so for minority workers) are forced to live under capitalism—all these, and more, violently victimize millions of workers every year. In turn, these are the conditions for training workers to deal with violence, and to learn how to use it against the ruling class.

However, a good deal of opportunism exists in our ranks in the shops and unions because we are afraid of violence. Violence will mount in the coming period. This will be due to the general upsurge in the class struggle and the drive of the ruling class to suppress workers.

We need more ideological training on this question and less phony karate classes which will never prepare anyone for anything.

- The third "ism" is patriotism. The whole idea of a "national interest" is a fraud! It says that there is a common cause for the oppressors and the oppressed as long as they live in one geographic area called a country. Meanwhile the oppressors continue to oppress and rake in their profits, their capital, and their interest.

The bosses would have you believe that you should risk your life and your children's lives to prevent some other country's boss from taking over his business. And they hammer at this theme every day all day on radio, TV and newsprint (buy American!) with the flags and the pledges and the anthems—and while workers stand and salute, they've got their hands in our pockets.

We say a boss is a boss is a boss in any country. And the only interest workers have is their class interest—and that is international.

One of the biggest sources of support for this nationalism (as well as racism and pacifism) comes from the revisionists who are always looking for ways to muzzle the class war. During the coming period we will have to strengthen our efforts against revisionism. More exposures of the Soviets and Chinese will be necessary. In our country, the ruling class will lean on various stripes of "lefts" to try to pull the wool over people's eyes.

We have had a good deal of experience on this score during the anti-war movement. One of the lessons we should draw is that we should not separate ourselves from the workers because this group or that group is there. We are going to have to fight for our ideas based on practice with other workers. We can't leave the auto industry, for example, because "Communist" Party members and Trotskyites are there. We made this mistake in the anti-war movement.

Having an independent line doesn't mean exclusiveness. In our own Party, one of the biggest developing weaknesses is to shy away from, or abdicate, class struggle. Often the excuse is used that the workers aren't ready for vigorous leadership. "They're not ready" to do this or that. But the facts are that workers all over the country **are fighting harder than ever,** resorting more than ever to strikes and job actions. This will probably increase. We have to participate, encourage sharpness, and move boldly into leadership in the class struggle if we want to win workers politically.

Here, a big danger would be to ally ourselves with the liberal imperialists. However, we must be able to have a real base in the working class and be able to work with groupings of forces who are seriously opposed to fascism, and to work with forces who can be won away from fascist ideas. We must be prepared to work in various organizations where these potential allies may be. (For more on this, see section IV.)

- The fourth "ism" is anti-Communism.

In the coming period, U.S. imperialism and others will marshal tidal waves of anti-communism. They realize that to succeed in their schemes they will have to try to prevent workers

from moving to the left and to Marxism-Leninism. Thus, they will single out the most militant and resourceful era of socialism and communist leadership to attack. They hope that their anti-communist tirades can keep the working class from moving to the only solution possible for the working class.

As their economic demise becomes apparent, the shriller they will become. This is one reason the publishing world is printing tens of millions of the anti-communist scribblings of Solzhenitsyn. The ruling class would love to discredit the socialist achievements of the first workers' state. They are ruthlessly attacking the first dictatorship of the proletariat. The only way open for them to do this and to suck in large numbers is to resurrect the anti-Stalin slanders and horror stories. This is intended to create cynicism, futility and passiveness.

Our party stands in the forefront of the defense of-and learning from-the experiences of the first workers' state. We cannot be driven from our position of respect for and learning from the experiences of the first leadership of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only we will determine what was useful and incorrect in the practice of Stalin and other communist leaders. (**Road to Revolution III** initiates an evaluation of many of these questions of importance and draws some conclusion.) The ruling class hated the leadership of Stalin because under his leadership the first workers' revolution was consolidated. They are petrified of it happening again. The ruling class knows full well that there is no return from another workers' revolution, especially in this country.

To hasten that day, we need to examine more closely the international communist movement during the last two periods of inter-imperialist wars—and learn from both the achievements and the mistakes.

IV. AN ANTI-WAR, ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT OR A CLASS-STRUGGLE MOVEMENT?

What shall our line be now that inter-imperialist rivalry has emerged once again—temporarily—as the dominant contradiction on the world scene? A look at the other recent two major periods of inter-imperialist rivalry is instructive.

In the first period, roughly from the turn of the 20th century to the end of World War I, the Social-Democratic forces of Europe produced three lines to meet the threat of growing reaction and war. One line called for defending the borders of one's "own" country in the event of an invasion. This line came to be known as "defense-ism". The second line called for disarmament of all nations and constituted the line of the peace movement of the time. The third line condemned all sides of the inter-imperialist rivalry and called for converting the imperialist war into a civil war between the workers and the bourgeoisie of all countries.

Needless to say, the first two lines constituted two variations on opportunism. The first, calling for support of one's national bourgeoisie, was perhaps more blatant. However, the second was no less dangerous, and maybe more so, because it was international in its application. The class-war line received the support of the Bolsheviks and represented the clearest expression of revolutionary politics and practice among the Social-Democrats of Europe. It finally became the line of all those who remained within the fold of Marxism during World War I.

Here is the way Lenin put the whole issue in 1915, when arguing against the anti-war movement of that time: "The temper of the masses in favor of peace often expresses the beginning of protest, anger and a realization of the reactionary nature of the war. It is the duty of all Social-Democrats to utilize that temper. They will take a most ardent part in any movement and in any demonstration motivated by that sentiment, but they will not deceive the people with declaring that a peace without annexations, without oppression of nations, without plunder, and without the embryo of new wars among the present governments and ruling classes, is possible in the absence of a revolutionary movement. Such deception of the people would merely mean playing into the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent governments and facilitating their counter-revolutionary plans. Whoever wants a lasting and democratic peace must stand for civil war against the governments and the bourgeoisie." (Lenin, **Collected Works**, Vol. 21, pp. 315-16.)

In the second period of inter-imperialist rivalry, from the early thirties through World War II, a different line became dominant among the Communist Parties of the world. The line was basically an anti-war movement line and is summed up in the concept of "the united front against war and fascism."

This line developed through various stages, first taking the road of peaceful coexistence with all governments: At the Seventh Congress of Soviets (Jan. 1935), Foreign Minister Molotov of the USSR said: "Recognizing the right of every people to choose any political and social order for itself, the Soviet Government does not practice discrimination between states according to their internal regime. While it considers National-Socialism and racialism the mortal enemy of all working people and of civilization itself, the Soviet Government, far from preaching a crusade against countries where these theories prevail, has attempted to preserve normal diplomatic and economic relations with them as with other countries" (A. Rothstein: **A History of the USSR**, p. 253).

The Soviet representative to the League of Nations made the same point in 1936, but called for an alliance of socialist and capitalist countries against fascism: "Our collaboration with other countries and our participation in the League of Nations are based on the principle of peaceful co-existence of two systems—the Socialist and the capitalist—and we consider that the latter includes the Fascist system. But Fascism is now ceasing to be an internal affair of the countries which preach it" (Rothstein: **Hist/USSR**, p. 253).

The same anti-war line developed in the United States. The U.S. Communist Party (C.P.U.S.A.)

as early as 1937 began organizing a "broad front" of forces against war and fascism. At its tenth Convention (1938) it adopted the line of a "democratic front." At this point, William Z. Foster, the head of the C.P.U.S.A., explained that "with the development of strong left trends in the Roosevelt wing of the Democratic Party . . . the conception of the people's front was broadened to include this Democratic element, along with such bodies as the American Labor Party, Minnesota Farmer Labor Party, Washington Commonwealth Federation, the trade unions, the National Negro Congress, the American Youth Congress, and so on. This 'democratic front,' says the main resolution of the convention, 'under the conditions prevailing in our country, represents the beginning of the development of a real people's front against reaction and fascism.' This was essentially what later became known as the 'Roosevelt coalition.'" (Foster: **History of the C.P.U.S.A.,** p. 382)

After the outbreak of World War II in Sept. 1939, but before the invasion of the Soviet Union, the C.P.U.S.A.—although it declared the war a rivalry between imperialisms for world domination—called for a program only partly stressing class struggle: "protect and improve living standards, democratic liberties, and the right to organize and strike." But it made a peace slogan the central rallying cry, "Keep America Out of the Imperialist War" (**History of the C.P.U.S.A.,** p. 388). What Foster lauded most in this period was the C.P. support of the American Peace Mobilization whose program went like this: "For a People's Peace. For a peace without indemnities, without annexations, based upon the right of all people in subjugated or colonial countries to determine their own destinies" (**History of the C.P.U.S.A.,** p. 388).

What a far cry are these formulations from Lenin's clear call for turning the imperialist war into a civil war against the capitalists of all countries. While there is much in these formulations that bona fide communists could support, these noteworthy demands are made in the context of giving greater emphasis to 1) a coalition of liberal capitalists, social-democrats, revisionists of various kinds, labor bureaucrats, and the C.P. **under the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie** ("Roosevelt coalition") and 2) peace rather than class struggle.

What this finally led to—after the Soviet Union was invaded by Hitler and the USA attacked by Japan—was a call for "Everything for National Unity!" and "Everything for victory over world-wide fascist slavery!" (**History of the C.P.U.S.A.,** p. 409). The C.P.U.S.A. so zealously followed these principles that it agreed to a suspension of strikes for the duration of the war. And while Foster tries to put the blame for C.P. revisionism wholly on the shoulders of Browder, it is clear that the peace policy and war policy of the C.P.U.S.A., calling for unity of the "good" capitalists and the communists against fascism, had to lead logically to Browder's position.

Another very important difference in line between the two periods concerns the communist defense of democratic rights. The line before and during World War II and even after was that communists are the best defenders of bourgeois democracy. The line on democratic rights in the earlier period went like this: "The Social-Democratic workers must counter the slightest government action, either before entering or during the war, towards abolishing or curtailing political liberties by forming illegal organizations to conduct systematic, persistent propaganda, undaunted by any sacrifices, for war against war, and explain to the masses the real character of the war" (Lenin, **Collected Works,** Vol. 23, p. 139).

Note Lenin's point is **not** "the best defenders of bourgeois democracy," not "peace," not "national unity," not the "good" capitalists and communists against the "bad" capitalists, but **illegal organizations to guarantee the democratic rights of the revolutionary movement, war against war, war against all the capitalists,** "good" or "bad."

The point is not that war is wonderful, nor that fascism is not absolutely the most repressive form of capitalism. The point is that "good" capitalists (liberals, moderates, conservatives) and "bad" capitalists (reactionaries and fascists) are matters of circumstances. When circumstances are such that capitalists profit from bourgeois democracy, then we have bourgeois democracy (always with a healthy dose of ruthless pro-capitalist violence against the working class). When the capitalists need fascism to protect profit and power, then we get absolute terrorism against the working class.

The main point is that the best way for the working class and its allies to defend themselves against mass repression and war is to **heighten the class struggle to the point of civil war against all capitalists.** That was the line of the Bolsheviks and it led to the first successful socialist revolution. The line of the world communist movement in the thirties and forties disarmed the working class and led to the quagmire of post-World War II revisionism, from which the international working class has not yet recovered and against which the Progressive Labor Party is the leading opponent.

The ability of the Bolsheviks to make class struggle and civil war a political reality in the first period of inter-imperialist class rivalry resulted from their close ties with the working class in trade union and other political struggles. The C.P.U.S.A. had equally close ties with the working class in both trade union and political struggles. Hence, objective circumstances favored the development of a class-struggle line into a civil war (revolution) line. But of course, the C.P.'s peace-and-national-unity line led the working class into the arms of the liberal bourgeoisie and the right wing-trade union leaders.

Our own circumstances are not the same as the Bolsheviks or the C.P.U.S.A. of the 30's. We do not have the ties these parties had to the working class. We are only now coming out of our isolation from the trade union movement. Hence, for us it may seem far-fetched to adopt a line of

civil war. True enough this may be for us a very long range goal. But we must keep it in mind—and in our public policy—as our goal.

Because of the relative weakness of our ties to trade union struggle, we must recognize that in order to make civil war a realistic political goal, it is necessary **to make trade union struggle on our jobs and recruitment to the party from our jobs, in the factories and offices, a primary aspect of our work.** Only in this way can we develop a movement capable of beating war and fascism, which means beating all capitalists. The history of the two different lines in the two earlier periods of inter-imperialist class rivalry makes this crystal clear.

V. BUILD THE PARTY

The main contradiction in the world is between the two imperialist juggernauts, the Soviet Union and the U.S. This contradiction must lead to war and fascism. U.S. bosses must tighten up and control the situation at home. This will lead to fascism. U.S. and Soviet rulers are preparing themselves externally through alliances. Some people throw up their hands in what seems to be an insoluble situation, a situation in which it appears that there won't be any winners. This type of passive or cynical approach ignores the lessons of history. And it repudiates Marxism-Leninism. There are things to do, and the crucial thing to be done is to build the revolutionary party.

Many people see the world only as it is now. They view their lives only as they are now. They don't really believe that war and fascism are inevitable as long as there is imperialism. Therefore, they reasonably question what is so important about building the party? Only a revolutionary party can build and move for power.

Recent history should have taught us at least one thing: pacifism and other half-way measures used to cope with the sharpest manifestations of imperialism **don't work**. The anti-war movement didn't stop war. The integration movement and other nationalist spinoffs didn't stop racism.

In terms of specific reform struggles we should wage both through independent mass action and within our unions and other organizations (but especially unions), these are just a few of the issues:

A. **OPPOSE:**

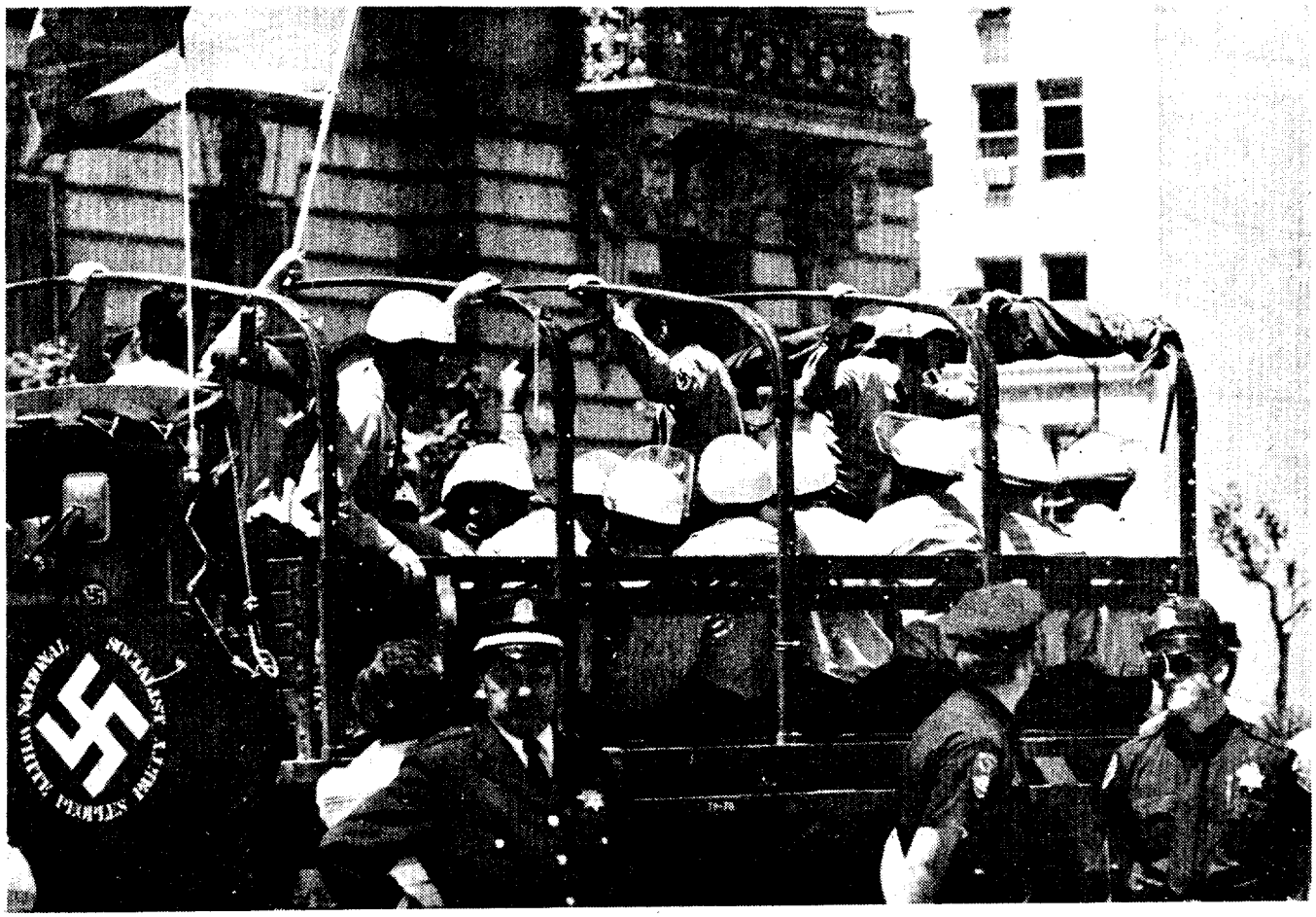
1. **National Interest-ism**—any attempt to force workers to cut back on pay or working conditions "for the good of the country"; any "Buy American" campaigns designed to divide workers in this country from our brothers around the world; patriotism campaigns designed to whip up workers' enthusiasm for their own misery.
2. **Anti-immigrant campaigns**—programs which will cause mass deportations, and generally help split the working class.
3. **Racism**—Every racist action on or off the job by boss, foreman, policeman, principal, newspaper, etc., or by workers who have gone over to the enemy. Racist policies of unions require special attack.

B. **FIGHT FOR:**

1. More international ties between unions and student (and other) organizations in different countries, especially contacts among the rank and file of these groups.
2. Support for strikes by workers in other countries, as well as for rebellions against U.S. (or other) imperialists.
3. Guarantees against racist layoffs written into contracts. We are fighting against **all** layoffs, but the ruling class is trying to win white workers to support layoffs, firings, etc., of minority workers. Therefore, special demands can and should be put forward to meet and defeat this anti-working class move.

C. **ORGANIZE:**

1. Caucuses in all trade unions can be the most important organized rank-and-file force to move workers into action against the bosses over the immediate issues of jobs, anti-racism, contract demands and strikes, 30 hours work for 40 hours pay, health and safety, and others. Through action around these issues, and with the participation and leadership of communists in PLP, these caucuses can not only gain the confidence of workers to be able to shut production to win demands, but this, in turn, will lead to the ouster of the current crop of piecards and enable the rank and file, led by communists, to take power in the unions.
2. Workers Action Movement chapters among all groups of workers—in unions and among the unorganized and unemployed; in working-class communities—can spearhead the unity of the working class, advance a Left line in all trade union situations, mobilize support of the entire working class behind whatever group of workers is facing sharp attack or is leading the class struggle at a particular time, and spread the demand and fight for 30 for 40 throughout the entire working class. WAM can group all the progressive, fighting forces within the labor movement—from caucuses, union committees, working-class community organizations, unemployment and welfare groups—to spark a resurgence that will organize millions of workers to fight the ruling class around demands in their class interests, and **fight as a class** rather than as isolated groups, separated from each other by union, craft, racism, age, sex, and (boss-created) national origin.



U.S. Nazi party on public parade in San Francisco last year.

And unions don't stop on-the-job oppression and layoffs. **Confining ourselves to reform struggles and movements won't solve anything.** In fact, it only guarantees the perpetuation of imperialism and its dire consequences. Naturally, we build and work in all positive movements **in order to win the movements to a revolutionary outlook based on their own experiences.**

None of these movements are oriented to the seizure of state power by the working class. Only the communist party can do that. And in this country the communist party is the Progressive Labor Party. We don't want to "repair" this system. You can't live with this system. You either destroy it or perish. The realities of life are answering the doubts and questions of people who think the world is going to stay pretty much as it is. Mass unemployment lines, preparations for war, and war itself are the realities. To be passive or to contemplate minimal action in the face of these developments is **SUICIDAL.** This is the losing position.

A movement geared to seize power; a movement organized to win power now in the unions around more advanced political questions like 30 hours work for 40 hours pay and anti-racism—this is the kind of movement that is training itself for the seizure of power by **creating a base for it.** On the one hand, it wins workers and others to acting on everything from the smallest questions which concern workers to the most advanced. Working side by side with other workers, the Party must win the working class and other forces to ideas and action for revolution. Revolution can stop imperialist war. Revolutionary action can destroy fascism. This is how people are going to be saved. This is the way the world and its international working class will live and march forward. There is no alternative to this. This outlook must and will become the center of millions of workers' lives. This will happen not only because we call and organize for it, but because the facts of life will demand it.

Many people sincerely ask the question, can we win? This is often asked after there is agreement with most or all of what we say. Perhaps we should turn the question upside down and pose it this way: **CAN WE AFFORD TO LOSE?** What does losing mean? It means fascism and war. It means racism and oppression. It is death and destruction to the very kids we are busy taking care of. After all a good parent, friend, comrade, workmate, relative, etc., is the one who not only concerns himself with the obvious, or what is right under his nose. A real friend is the one who sees what is going to happen and organizes

his various relations and friends to fight back against it. A good worker is not one who just works hard. A good worker is not the one who rivets attention to the things around him. A good scientist is not the one who can't enlarge views. To be good at anything one must see ahead and **ACT with boldness.**

Naturally, the ruling class would love to limit our views to "my" children, "my" family, "my" block, "my" job, "my" school, etc. A communist is one who can unite various forces and introduce advanced aspects of the party line into the immediate struggle. We do so not simply to be smart guys, or to raise extraneous ideas. We raise these ideas so the workers and their allies can WIN. Teachers can't hang onto their jobs if auto workers are out of work. Steel workers can't sit back and say, "Well, there isn't too much unemployment in our industry, so I'll just sit tight." If one section of the working class suffers, it won't be long before every worker suffers. Or, as Karl Marx put it over a century ago, "The worker with white skin can never be free if the worker with black skin is not. Pragmatism and selfishness are two weapons that the bosses use to immobilize us."

Others ask the following question based on what they see—"Will it be any better if your party is in power." Turn this question around and ask, are we workers and our friends worse than Rockefeller and Kissinger? Why shouldn't we have more confidence in ourselves than in Rockefeller? We can learn from errors of the past. **All** of us can. The working class is the wisest and most powerful force on earth. This is objectively the case, since we create life and production. And in our time it has always been the working class, led by communists, who have defeated the reactionary, decaying bosses. We have more than enough experience and training going for us to prevent the restoration of power to the old—or new—capitalists.

WE CAN WIN! AND WE WILL IMPROVE ON PAST REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENCE! Any other point of view puts the world back in the Middle Ages. That is the only place the current ruling classes are capable of taking us. Is this where we want to go? The answer to this has always been clear: WE MARCH FORWARD! Why should those who have built and created life, technology, and progressive developments for society be doubtful of their future? Let the bosses piss and moan. Their culture, their economy, their world is tottering. Let us give it a big shove off the stage of history, and come on with our world.

Never underestimate the importance of building the Party. Building the Party is extending life. It is the answer to that which plagues this world. Building the Party is not just a casual thing which is done by some people some time. Building the Party is the thing that all communists do **all the time.** Nor do we limit Party-building to a charmed circle. We don't limit or hide the Party among some mystical elite. We build the Party openly, boldly because this is the central aspect of not only our lives, but of all workers' lives. Can it not be said that communists, acting around the theory of Marx, Lenin, and others have touched every person's life in the world since the communist manifesto was printed? Was this not true during World War II?—and since? Is not the "spectre" of communism still haunting the ruling class? Of course it is. It always will until the workers sweep the ruling class from the face of the earth.

The following excerpts from various bourgeois publications

demonstrate the ruling-class position on war and fascism.

1. *Seattle Times*, 11/15/74, AP wireservice, Article titled: "Kissinger urges cooperation to cut oil use."
   Only a serious reduction in consumption (of oil) by industrialized nations will impel oil-producing nations to negotiate lower prices, Kissinger said. Otherwise, "we face further and mounting worldwide shortages, unemployment, poverty and hunger" imperiling international order.

   further on in the article:
   Kissinger warned the oil nations not to raise prices while the West struggles for a common position. He said such an effort "would be disruptive and dangerous."

2. *Seattle P-I*, 11/3/74, Article by Kingsbury Smith, European Director and Chief Foreign Writer. The *Hearst Newspapers*, titled: "Threat of New War in Mideast."
   Another Arab-Israel conflict is likely to bring the United States and Russia to the brink of nuclear holocaust that could imperil survival of the human race.

   and further on in the article:
   Sen. J.W. Fulbright, D-Ark., also said there is acute danger of a nuclear war in the Middle East.

3. *Seattle Times*, 11/7/74, Syndicated column by Joseph Alsop, titled: "So much depends on Kissinger's success in Middle East."
Before 12 months have passed, the United States may well be facing military action in the Persian Gulf to counter another oil embargo.

and further on in the article:
Yet another Middle Eastern war, plus another anti-United States oil embargo, plus all the rest that now threatens in that area, will fatally upset the world's balance of power. And that was the real trouble in the 1930's.

4. *Seattle P-I*, 11/20/74, Syndicated column by James Reston of the N.Y. *Times*, titled "U.S. Must Prepare For Mid-East War."
It is reassuring to be told that there will be no war this week, but most observers here think the problem is not to minimize the dangers of war there (the Middle East) but to prepare quickly for a situation that is very likely to get out of control in the next six or nine months.

and further on in the article:
"The Soviets," he (George Ball) concludes, "have continued to compete directly with us for influence in the Arab World and to frustrate all of our moves toward peace. And the danger that the Middle East might become another Balkans involving the superpowers in a nuclear confrontation should never be lightly dismissed."

5. *Seattle P-I*, 12/17/74, Syndicated column by Jack Anderson titled "Anti-Israel Talk Grows."
The muttering against Israel is growing louder in the backrooms of the State and Defense Departments.
State Department strategists have warned grimly that a resumption of the Middle East war almost certainly would lead to another Arab oil embargo. This would be a disastrous blow, in their opinion, to the U.S. economy—an economic Pearl Harbor that would plunge the United States into a severe recession.

and further on in the article:
But as we reported in an earlier column, a new oil crisis could cause the United States to change its policy. The United States will take military action, if necessary, to protect its "vital interests" and some strategists have suggested privately that another oil embargo would affect the nation's "vital interests."

6. *Business Week*, 1/13/75, Interview with Henry Kissinger. Everyone should read this interview. Some selections that are very interesting:
BW:
How long do you think the economies of Italy, the United Kingdom, and France can go without serious trouble because of the strains imposed by the oil deficits?

Kissinger:
All West European economies, with the exception of the Federal Republic of Germany, are going to be in more or less serious trouble within the next 18 months. Which is another reason for striving for a much closer coordination of economic policies.

BW:
Can this economic trouble lead to political trouble?

Kissinger:
Without any question. Every government is judged not only by its performance but whether it is believed to be trying to master the real problems before it will erode. F.D. Roosevelt could go along for several years without a great improvement in the economic conditions because the public believed he was dealing with the problems. The danger of purely national policies is that they are patently inadequate for dealing with economic problems—especially in Europe—and, as the sense of impotence magnifies, the whole political base will erode.
As it is, the Communist vote in Italy, and to some extent in France, has remained constant regardless of economic conditions. A substantial proportion of the population has felt sufficiently disaffected with the system, even when the system was performing well, that they voted Communist in order to keep the pressure on. As the Communist vote grows, the flexibility of the political system diminishes. Economic decline in Europe would therefore have serious political consequences.

BW:
There appears to be a rise in enthusiasm for the far right, too, a feeling that what is needed is an authoritative man that can cope with these labor problems, these inflation problems, etc.

Kissinger:
If you have a major economic crisis, the emergence of authoritarian governments of the left or the right is a distinct possibility.

Earlier in the interview Kissinger gives his statement on military action in the Middle East:
BW:
One of the things we also hear from businessmen is that in the long run the only answer to the oil cartel is some sort of military action. Have you considered military action on oil?

Kissinger:
Military action on oil prices?

BW:
Yes.

Kissinger:
A very dangerous course. We should have learned from Vietnam that it is easier to get into a war than to get out of it. I am not saying that there's no circumstance where we would not use force. But it is one thing to use it in the case of a dispute over price, it's another where there's some actual strangulation of the industrialized world.

7. *Seattle Times*, 1/13/75, AP and UPI press service article titled: "Ford Backs up Kissinger":
President Ford has personally backed up Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, saying the United States might use force if the industrialized world were strangled—"just about on your back"—for want of oil, but not just to lower prices.

and further on in the article:
In Brussels, Joseph Luns, secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) agreed with Mr. Ford.
"I would say any nation, faced with strangulation, is likely to consider the use of force."

Luns, who is Dutch, said yesterday. "It has rarely been in history that a country accepts being strangled without taking some counter-measures."

8. *Seattle P-I,* 11/5/74, C.L. Sulzberger's syndicated column titled "World Can't Afford More Pollyannas"; Sulzberger is a columnist for the New York *Times.*
Forty-five years ago the Great Depression began with a crash on Wall Street and by the time it staggered to its halt the whole world had been shaken out of fat-dripping illusions. Now we appear to be on or over the brink of a similar collapse although—as in 1929—few leaders are willing to admit it and even the prissy word "recession" is disliked.

   and further on in the article:
Let us not forget that the great depression of the 1930's produced in Roosevelt's New Deal radical social reform that saved American democracy—and also Hitler's Nazism which wrecked the world.

9. *Seattle Times,* 11/7/74, Christian Science Monitor Service's syndicated column by Joseph C. Harsch, titled "Shifting control of the world's affairs."
It is accurate to say that the great industrial countries of the Northern hemisphere are no longer lords of creation. The time is long since past when London, Paris and Berlin could dominate the affairs of the world. The time may be passing in which most initiatives in the world began either in Washington or Moscow.

10. *Seattle P-I,* 1/5/75, UPI newsservice article titled "Industrial nations could collapse Fulbright Warns."
J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., ended 30 years in the Senate last week convinced that industrial nations, including the United States, face economic and political collapse unless they can gain a substantial reduction in oil prices in the next few years.
"It's very serious, this continued erosion of the economic base of the non-communist world," he said in a farewell interview with UPI. "It's no small matter. I think it is much more serious than the administration seems to think."
Fulbright said it was crucial to persuade oil-producing countries within the next five years to lower their prices from $10 or more a barrel to a "reasonable price" of $7 or $8 a barrel.
"Otherwise, we are all going broke," he said.
"And when I say broke, I mean the system—I mean the non-communist economic system—is very likely to collapse and with it the individual countries."
"As you know, the political system usually goes with it, and you get a trend towards authoritarianism, and everything else."

11. *Seattle Times, Times* news service article titled "New World War Predicted by Chou," 1/20/75.
"The two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, are the biggest international oppressors and exploiters today, and they are the source of a new world war."
Chou's speech called on people of all countries to prepare for war.

12. *Seattle Times,* 1/23/75, Gallup Poll:
One in ten would go to war over oil.

13. *Seattle Times,* 1/24/75, UPI press service article titled "Hints of U.S. military move defied; Oil nations to resist West."
Algerian Foreign Minister Abdelaziz Bouteflika said today American threats of a confrontation with the oil-producing nations could lead to world war. He called on the oil nations to create a new order to oppose this.

14. *FORTUNE,* 12/74, editorial titled "What the U.S. Should Be Doing About O.P.E.C."
With vast sums of money piling up in O.P.E.C. accounts and the world's economic stresses rapidly worsening, it is becoming all too clear that the power of the oil cartel threatens the future of Western civilization.

   further on in the article:
Meanwhile, barring military intervention, the industrialized world has to go on buying cartel oil at cartel prices, and money galore will keep flowing to the exporting countries.

15. *Seattle Times,* 1/26/75, syndicated column by Joseph Alsop through the LA *Times* news syndicate, titled "Can the American Society Survive? Note: This article is probably the most pessimistic one yet to appear in the popular press. Its significance lies in the fact that it dwells on Kissinger and his view of the future. It is no secret that Kissinger is a leader of the Council on Foreign Relations and a protege of Rockefeller.
The fact may be denied, but it is still remarkably interesting and instructive. The fact is that the secretary of state of the United States gravely doubts the long-term power of survival of the American society that he now serves so well.
"As a historian," he has more than once said in relaxed moments, "you would now have to predict that our kind of society would very probably not last much longer. But if you are an official, you have no such freedom. You just have to do the best you can."

   further on in the article:
I think now that if a secret poll were taken of the most admired officials having to do with this country's dealings with the rest of the world, an actual majority would prove to be pessimists about the American future. And here, mind you, I am not even speaking of the kind of economic, monetary and financial difficulties that have suddenly begun to loom almost as large as they did in the 1930's, when I first went to work.

16. *Foreign Affairs,* October, 1974, article by Sen. Mondale titled "Beyond Detente: Toward International Economic Security."
Economic issues are now front and center for the world's political leaders, topping the agenda of both domestic and foreign policy concerns. While the major international security issues of the last quarter-century are still with us—the competition in strategic nuclear arms, the struggle of differing political systems, the confrontation of massively armed alliances in Europe, the menace of great-power involvement in local conflict—these are now being overshadowed by the risk that the operation of the international economy may spin out of control. For if this happens there will be no graver threat to international stability, to the survival of Western democratic forms of government, and to national security itself.

Current Developments in the U.M.W.

INTRODUCTION

At least two recent rank-and-file movements for trade union democracy have emerged in the labor movement in two major unions—the United Mine Workers (UMW) and the largest district of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA)—both of which symbolize the continuing rebelliousness of U.S. workers against U.S. bosses and their lieutenants in union leadership. While it is not the purpose of this article to examine the history of these particular movements, it would be important to analyze the basis from which a successful rank-and-file movement can grow. This is especially important at a time when a deepening recession may very well impel even more worker rebellion to fight back against the worsening conditions being thrust on the backs of the working class.

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Probably all unions in the U.S. are run on the basis of class collaboration. That is, the leadership of the international unions function as "partners" of the bosses that they are allegedly fighting. While there are individual differences, and some may appear more militant than others at times, they all proceed on the theory that if the boss goes under, the workers will go under; therefore, if we don't cooperate with the boss to one extent or another, we will be cutting off our nose to spite our face.

Of course, the reality of life under capitalism is exactly the opposite. Antagonism between the two classes (most union leaders don't even want to admit the existence of classes) is constant and unalterable. The bosses view it as: the less the workers get, the more the bosses get. The growth of a company and its ability to compete against (drown) other companies is usually dependent on keeping costs low and productivity high, two ingredients which make for intense exploitation of workers. This is not based on a boss being "good" or "bad" but is built into the capitalism system. It is the way a boss makes profit and profit is the life-blood of capitalism.

Given that, and given union leaders who believe in cooperation as the workers' salvation, there will be constant rebellion by workers against "leaders" who mis-lead, who drive workers into the arms of the bosses. Part of this rebellion takes the form of wildcat strikes, or rank-and-file-forced "authorized" strikes, departmental work stoppages, sit-downs and other militant reactions at the point of production. Another element of this rebellion is reflected in attempts to throw out the union officials who prevent those actions which workers decide are in their best class interests, union officials who spend much of their time establishing cozy niches for themselves, robbing the workers blind while tightening their hold on the union apparatus through various autocratic means.

At certain points, for a variety of reasons, some of these labor fakers become ripe for picking. Various alternatives present themselves to the rank and file on how to rid the union of these leeches and replace them with **real** working-class leaders.

Fifty years of dictatorial rule in the UWM led to intolerable conditions in the mines and constant

rank-and-file rebellion. Jack Yablonski, a member of the UAW Executive Board and part of this autocracy, saw an opportunity to capture this sentiment, broke with the Boyle machine and began to organize a movement to oust it. Boyle, not about to give up his nest egg, had Yablonski murdered. But this only sparked greater opposition, and various sections of it settled on Arnold Miller as the choice to revamp the UMW. After a long and bitter election struggle, supervised by the U.S. Department of Labor, Miller was declared the winner and rode into office with the pledge to democratize the UMW and win better conditions for the miners.

Similarly, Ed Sadlowski, a USWA staff man and former steelworker, organized a campaign to oust the Abel machine representative in District 31, the largest in the union, centered around Chicago and Gary. (This district, incidentally, has more members than the entire UMW.) He also has pledged to make the USWA a true representative of rank-and-file interests (the same pledge, by the way, which Abel made in **his** campaign, years back, to oust the MacDonald machine in the USWA). After a long struggle, an initial fraudulent election, and then finally another Labor Department-supervised ballot, Sadlowski won by a 2 to 1 margin.

Although in both these and other cases, the people leading these campaigns **pledge** to change the conditions of the rank and file for the better, the main platform on which they ride into office is one for "trade union democracy," supposedly ripping out the autocratic rule of the past and allowing the rank and file to make itself heard, to actually determine the course of the union, the demands, when to strike, etc. Supposedly, once the rank and file has this power, once they have the real say, through their newly-elected officials, they will be able to make a real fight in their interests.

Obviously this is what the rank and file wants. The question remains, what does it get, and why?

WHAT IS TRADE UNION DEMOCRACY?

Is the foundation of trade union democracy, of workers determining their course of action, contained in the rules of the union, in the democratic election of all officials, in the right to vote for a strike and the right to decide when to settle, in the right to ratify contracts, in democratic procedure at all union meetings on whatever level? Obviously, all these things are extremely important in the rank and file running their union. But they are only the **form** of the trade union democracy. The key question is, what is the **content?**

Neither Miller nor Sadlowski (using them as the current examples of a long line of reformers) had organized mass, nation-wide or district-wide rank-and-file **actions against the coal or steel bosses,** which shut off production and profits to win the workers' demands. Neither won on the basis that they had proven themselves, in life, as all-out battlers against the bosses **at the point of production.**

Had they run for office on that kind of platform, **there would have been no need for a government-supervised election.** The rank and file, believing in the above kind of action, and in leaders who organize it, would simply vote with their feet. "If we are denied the right to select these militants as our leaders, then we will simply strike, shut the bosses' production, until the boss will be forced to recognize what we say is the union and the union leadership."

Any union leadership that must base its victory on the **form** the election takes, regulated by the government, rather than on the power of mass, militant action against the bosses, should make the rank and file very wary right from the start. "Trade union democracy" is worthless unless it is based on the organization of mass action at the point of production, where the main power lies for workers under capitalism. And, as we shall see, the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

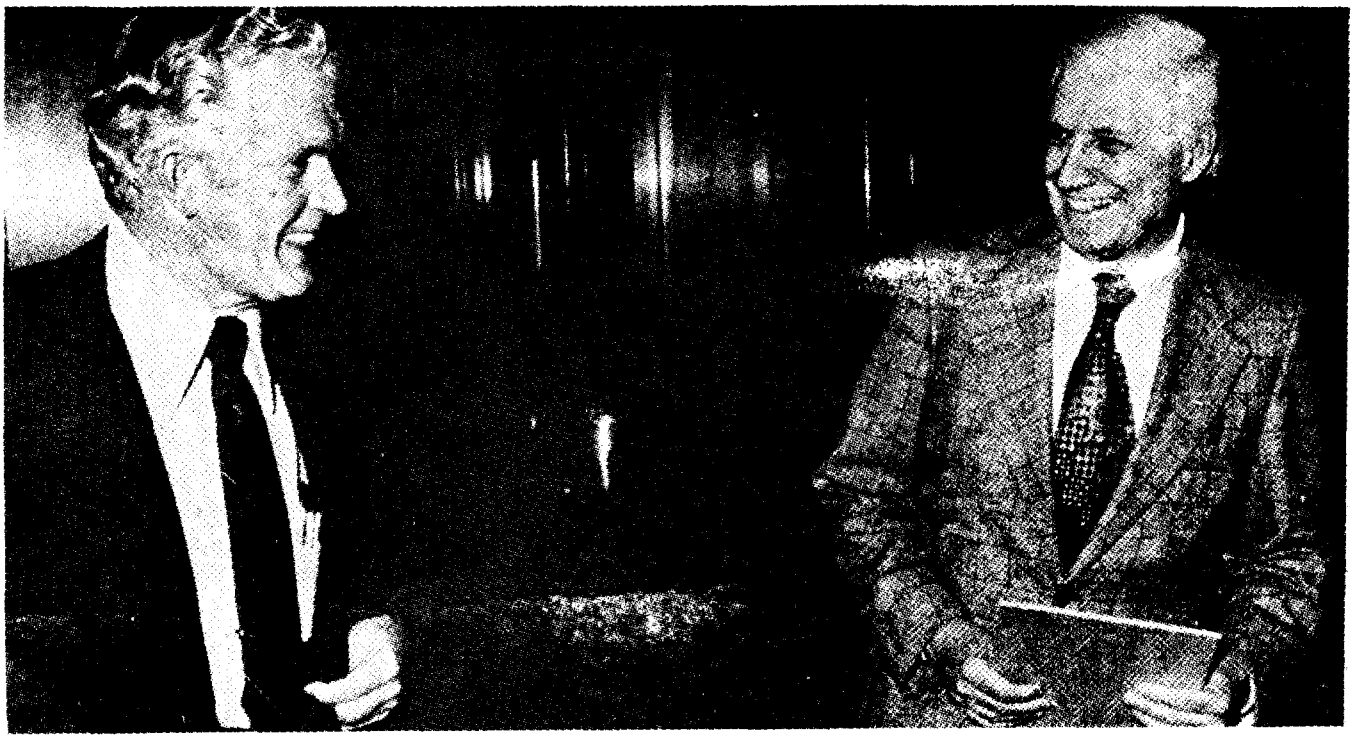
Once leaders of a movement cannot depend on the massed power of the rank and file, what must they depend on? Well, both in Miller's and Sadlowski's case, they seek out (or are sought out by) liberal lawyers who see the opportunity to both advance the liberals' influence over workers as well as feather their own nests. Miller's campaign against Boyle was virtually run by liberal lawyer Joseph Rauh out of a Washington-based foundation that drew much of its money from none other than Rockefeller, DuPont and Carnegie interests! (See **PL** magazine, April, 1973, Vol. 9, No. 1) This was combined with the supervision of the U.S. Labor Department, true for Sadlowski also, under the "democratic" provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act.

Once you have to depend on the bosses' government and even the bosses' money to win a "rank-and-file campaign," the rank and file is in trouble. And this is borne out by life.

This is being written just as the miners are voting on the first contract negotiated by Miller, during a strike more than three weeks old. Without even knowing the outcome of that vote, it is interesting to note the position advocated by Miller at various stages of this struggle.

Miller started by saying this would be the best contract the miners would ever win. And he was very careful to point out that his pledge of democracy would rule everything, from election of officers to the rank-and-file voting on the new contract for the first time in the history of the UMW. But early in the day, when contract demands were being determined, Miller warned that the rank and file would have to be "realistic." Even with the coal operators making fantastic profits—some 700% over the previous year—Miller already was attempting to tone down the newly-won "trade union democracy."

Then when the first agreement was announced, when miners heard that they would still not have the right to strike (except by wildcatting) during the life of the new contract over violations, safety, etc.; that the wage increase was not even keeping pace with the cost of living; that they still would not have the right of the union safety committee



Miller and coal bosses' negotiator Farmer—all smiles.

to close a mine if it was deemed dangerous to the miners' life and limb; when they saw pictures of a smiling Miller with a smiling Guy Farmer (top negotiator for the coal bosses)—no doubt, they rightfully became somewhat suspicious.

When this was reflected in the 38-man bargaining council rejecting the first contract settlement, immediately stories were planted in the bosses' press—which Miller did nothing to deny—that this opposition was caused by either Miller's former enemies in the Boyle machine who were still hanging on, by "hothead militants" in the West Virginia district, intent on striking over every little thing, or by a rank and file which had been submerged for so long a time that they had to "let off steam" and "get it out of their system."

While it may be true that factions still exist in the UMW and oppose Miller for their own narrow reasons, it obviously also could be true that the rank and file was trying to exercise some of the "trade union democracy" it had been promised. But once the **CONTENT** of that democracy exceeded what Miller was prepared to fight for, it soon became "hothead" and "irresponsible."

So Miller was forced to return to the negotiating table to win a better contract. This time he came back with a little more, but still without some of the items missing in the first agreement. This time a rejection by the Bargaining Council was reversed in less than two hours with both "tough talk" from Miller and threats from federal "mediator" Usery. A lot more trouble was encountered out in the mining areas as Miller tried to sell the contract to the rank and file, again warning that if they tried to win the missing items (although unable to explain how the new seniority provisions would work) by staying on strike, the miners would really be up against it—the government, the shaky state of the economy, the energy crisis, Taft-Hartley injunctions, etc. It had become really "irresponsible" now to oppose the contract. And, to seal the attitude but good, Miller had spoken to Ford on the phone and assured him, "for the good of the country," he would go back and sell this agreement to the rank and file.

So Miller's vaunted "trade union democracy" becomes something which is "irresponsible" once the rank and file exercises it!

Obviously, if a Miller or a Sadlowski or any other reformer wins union power based on backing by liberal lawyers, through a government-controlled balloting, rather than the mass, organized power of the rank and file in action against the bosses, then their reaction to the bosses, to the pressure of the bosses' government, and even to remnants of the old autocratic machine is predictable, especially when the crunch comes.

Not having based union power on organizing rank-and-file-power at the point of production, such liberal leaders—whether they want to or not—will inevitably capitulate to the bosses and their government when the moment of truth arrives. The much-vaunted "trade union democracy" which they established and helped to place them in

ideas, ideas that will enable the working class to see through the various bosses' ideas that are holding them back from fighting in their best class interests.

Communists' and other militant workers' readiness to fight against **ALL** anti-working class forces and ideas, and to organize rank-and-file power at the point of production, is precisely what draws the fire of the bosses and their liberal flunkies, in and out of the labor movement. Liberals in the labor leadership will refuse to work with communists because they, the liberals, are responsible to work **within** and **for** the system, and therefore **against** the best interests of the rank and file when those interests **inevitably** run counter to the system.

Workers constantly respond to the oppression of the system with sharp militant struggle, often at the point of production, but do so tactically; that is, without a long-range outlook, with the spontaneous desire to meet the attack of the moment. Without a basic understanding of the system, and therefore without feeling the necessity to overthrow it, they will be set back by the bosses' ideas and actions to back up those ideas —"public interest," injunctions, use of troops, refusal of strike funds, unemployment benefits, etc.

It is communist strategy, the answer to these bosses' ideas and actions, that makes the difference. Having the long-range understanding of the necessity to wipe out capitalism and its profit system, communists can then devise the immediate tactics in a way that takes into account all road-blocks put up by a system **designed** to oppress workers. This does not necessarily mean that communist ideas and militant struggle at the point of the production automatically win. But it does mean that the outcome of the particular struggle will mean some immediate gains plus **the building of a movement** that will be able to take on the bosses at an even higher level in the future. It also means the development of working-class leaders in the heat of struggle that become steeled against the bosses and more ready to give leadership to greater numbers of workers. Many of them will, and do, join the communists, in this case, the PLP.

Inevitably, phonies in such organizations as the "Communist" Party—who have sold out their militant traditions—will strive to malign communists and other militants who put forward ideas that run counter to such reformers as the UMW's Miller. They try to divide true communists from the working class by saying communists in PLP "are joining the bosses in attacking the workers' union and its leader." But the actual class struggle—and who is responsible to which class—will reveal who is supporting the bosses' ideas and who is organizing a real fight against the bosses. The revisionists in the "Communist" Party and their ilk always find themselves on the side of the liberals, the Kennedys, and their flunky politicians—in and out of the unions—trying to lead the workers away from militant struggle. This was shown in their support of Kennedy and Johnson in the presidential elections of 1960 and 1964.

THE TRUE ROAD TO TRADE UNION DEMOCracy, of a militant labor movement fighting in the best interests of the working class, is through organization of mass struggle at the point of production, defeating all the bosses' ideas that run counter to workers' interests, including their laws, their injunctions, their cops and troops, their "public interest" garbage, and their liberal flunkies who peddle the bosses' wares in the guise of being "responsible" to the system. This mass struggle, which right now shapes up around unemployment, racist layoffs, for jobs and for 30 hours work for 40 hours pay, will produce the understanding, under the leadership of communists, that will lead to the complete destruction of capitalism altogether.

Experiences of Communist Organizing in the U.S. Army

INTRODUCTION

"Hello, Joe? Denny here. Listen—I'm still at the induction center. I gave out the leaflets, disrupted the physical, made some speeches about the imperialist war in Vietnam—you know, I said I was a communist, that we needed revolution, all that. But the sons of bitches still took me! What do you think I ought to do now?"

"Organize. Good luck!"

Thus the Progressive Labor Party began its work in the bosses' armed forces in 1966, with the drafting of one of its members. Up to that date, no one had been accepted from PL. The party had fought against going into the service to organize. The job was too difficult, our cadre were inexperienced, and other similar rationalizations were used. The experience of Davis turned around the party's thinking on the matter. We began the major organized, anti-imperialist, pro-working class campaign inside the army, an effort which lasted for 7 years. This article is an effort to trace the development of that struggle.

Who are our friends and who are our enemies in the armed forces? One starts by looking at the role of the armed forces as a whole. They are the trump cards of the capitalist state, wielded in the interests of the boss class alone. As a part of the state, the armed forces hold a peculiar relation to the material forces of production. They do not produce value, although they are essential to the production of any value. Without the armed forces (and other state organs), capitalism could not resist the rebellions of workers.

As a system of social relations, the army is peculiar. There is not a ceaseless effort by the brass to exploit surplus-value from soldiers (like bosses do from workers). It is not unusual for soldiers to have absolutely nothing to do in terms of production. A frequent complaint is boredom or chickenshit assignments. On the other hand, the legal relations resemble indentured servitude. You may not quit a job, as can a "free" worker. You do not have legal hours of work. You do not have 'due process' as in the civilian criminal system. (Not that due process is observed in most civilian cases; at least it is there 'legally'). You are required to perform whatever tasks you are ordered to do—including the murder of fellow workers. Unionization is, of course, illegal. So-called 'bourgeois' democratic rights' don't exist.

Because the social structure of the army does vary significantly from typical capitalist factory relations, the presence of the army in the midst of capitalist relations jeopardizes its special forms. Soldiers who see their friends and neighbors working a 40-hour week with some benefits, free to quit their job if they want to, become particularly discontented with the restrictions which the army puts on them. This discontent is magnified when the GI realizes that he has been bamboozled into enlisting by a lying recruiter in the first place! Life on the outside is not particularly rosy, of course. The 40-hour week becomes increasingly a myth, as families work several jobs just to make ends meet. Nevertheless, the myth is there, and it has a powerful effect on the average GI's thinking.

The army responds to the external pressure of normal capitalist relations in two ways. On the one hand, it tries to hide, to isolate its soldiers from civilians. The army is a self-sustained operation, complete with internal guard duty, internal KP, internal garbage collection (police calls, "asses and elbows"), internal recreation, and physical requirements to differentiate soldiers from civilians (haircuts and uniforms). In World War II, you could be courtmartialed for wearing civilian clothes—in your own home while on leave!

Anti-war sentiment, and anti-military sentiment, were important aspects of the civilian population during the Vietnam era. The effects of these sentiments on the soldiers were dangerous to the brass. The result was to begin to move major troop bases away from population centers, where there were large concentrations of workers. Ft. Dix (near New York City, and the center of much struggle) has been virtually closed down, several other bases have been closed down entirely, and

Ft. Hood GI's hold an anti-war march, 1971

the bases located in the Louisiana swamps and the forests of Missouri have been strengthened (CAMP News, May 1973).

While attempting to reinforce isolation from the civilian population, certain concessions have been forced on the military during the 60s and 70s as political consciousness and struggle developed both in the army and in the population at large. The proximity of the civilian world began to take its toll on army life. Thus, civilian KPs were hired—at slave wages—to replace GIs who were particularly disgusted with this extra duty. The command structure began to emphasize the 40-hour week as a standard, with "comp time" for overtime and special duties. Civilian clothes could be worn off-duty, and even appearance standards ebbed. Moustaches were legalized, sideburns crept down, hair grew longer, boots glistened less—not that the army really wanted to do this, but these were the minimum reforms which they could make which, they thought, could stave off the tremendous rebelliousness of this period.

THESE REFORMS DID NOT BRING INTO QUES-tion the central role of the army—repression. They were sops forced onto the service by rebelliousness, and because one of the standards by which GIs judged their oppression was how they stood vis-a-vis the civilian population. And because these reforms did nothing to alter the fundamental internal contradiction of the armed forces themselves—that is, the subjugation of workers to the brass for the purpose of fighting sharply against their class interest—they failed to stop the rebelliousness of the troops.

The army which imperialism requires cannot be bought with promises of long hair, 40-hour work-weeks, and educational benefits. The army requires, in its active, war-time phase especially, a strong combination of coercion and false consciousness to be at all reliable. Patriotism, racism and anti-communism are important ideological elements of false consciousness which are fostered through indoctrination, lies and training. But the most important element of false consciousness is defeatism, that you can't beat the army. It is the desired product of the continual coercion meted out to GIs, from the day they step off the bus to their last salute to their company commander. Our party's experience proves that all these elements of false consciousness can be defeated through struggle, and that the grip the army holds over the masses of enlistees is slim indeed.

Central to the needs of the imperialist army is a respected or feared chain of command. It is important to recognize both the similarities and differences between the chain of command of the army and that of industry. While superficially similar (officer, NCO (non-commissioned officer), EM (enlisted men) vs. management, foremen, workers), an examination of the military chain itself reveals some peculiarities that revolutionaries must consider in discovering their friends within the structure of the armed forces.

THE CLASS STRUCTURE OF THE ARMY

The officer corps is made up of highly indoctrinated lackeys. The highest level officers are almost all West Pointers, with a crusty tradition of mindless service to capitalism. Their promotion through the ranks is based on their **willingness** to carry out their orders without question, and on their **ability** to carry them out. During peacetime, the absurdity of their antics is clearest. They lose sleep over parades, inspections, and over who gets to kiss the superior's ass the most and with the most gusto. In war, the same principles apply. The body count is primary —whoever gets the most bodies gets the promotion. The field grade officers and above—the career officers—are reliable agents of capitalism. They are trained in slavishness and commandism. They are thoroughly bourgeois. There is no way to ally with them. They must be destroyed without mercy.

Junior officers—captains and below—fall into three main categories. Some of them are career soldiers who just haven't gotten rank. They are really just like the ones mentioned above. They have to be wiped out. Some junior officers vacillate, however. Many are in the service because the army paid their way to school. Some opportunistically went through ROTC or OCS to avoid the unpleasantness of being a grunt. Naturally they drip with bourgeois habits. But they are not committed and loyal to imperialism the way the career officers are. In some situations, particularly situations of sharp struggle like in Vietnam, they will desert their fellow officers because they opportunistically see it in their interests to do so. Occasionally a junior officer can even be won over ideologically to a socialist perspective. This second group of officers is unstable, and often dangerous to the working class movements, because it is within this group that bourgeois misleadership can develop the most easily, precisely because of their background, training, and position in the army. When they fight for reform, it is only in the most legalistic framework; they constantly backtrack, and usually end up turning on the working class forces to save their own ass. Nevertheless, we must be aware of some junior officers who can be useful, if they are kept in a secondary role in the struggle.

THE THIRD GROUP OF OFFICERS INCLUDES the professionals—the doctors, lawyers, and clergy. Often the two former groups are drafted or join for opportunist reasons, that is, for scholarships through medical or law school. Some of them can play an important role in the struggle. Doctors can fight against the butchery that goes on in military hospitals. Lawyers can sometimes help in the fight against the UCMJ. The professionalism, opportunism, and individualism of this third group makes them unreliable in any real struggle. They are prone to dramatic gestures, such as that of Dr. Levy in Vietnam, which do not contribute in any great measure to the development of the working class movement.

As for the clergy, forget it. They can occasionally be useful the way congressmen can be useful

Lawrence, Mass. Striking textile workers are stopped from marching by riot control GI's, Jan. 12, 1912.

in a particular individual problem. But as an ally in the mass struggle, they are useless. In fact, while in general we can say that the clergy in the society at large is at best a questionable ally in a very few cases, in the army even those few cases are hard to find. The "Christian Soldiers" in the army are the most reactionary of all clergy.

The armed forces are aware that the last two categories of officers vacillate. The brass deliberately set out to separate and isolate all officers from enlisted men, in terms of clubs, mess halls, "Military Courtesy," and job differences. Even the most progressive junior officer is constantly under pressure to move into ideological acceptance and alliance with the military tradition.

Non-commissioned officers are the transmission belt between the officers and the enlisted men. They have come from the ranks of the EM, and have "risen" above them. Very few NCOs consider themselves successful. They generally are cynical about life, are in for their 20 (or 30) so they can retire, and above all do not wish to rock the boat. They feel themselves trapped in their role, because most of them have failed in the outside world, and have turned to the army for security, much as a baby clings to a ragged teddy bear. To lose their position in the army would be a tremendous blow, for that would mean ultimate failure, since they have already "failed" in the much tougher "outside world." The NCO often turns to the army to escape the class struggle raging "out there," where he is not sure what to

do, and does not have the stomach to join with the working class struggle.

The senior NCOs, then, carry out their orders, channel their resentment into constant attacks on EM, and because of their fear of losing their job or missing a promotion, they will go berserk over little details, like the quality of the paint job on the barracks steps.

Naturally, to justify this kind of disgusting parasitical existence to himself, the senior NCO internalizes the propaganda of the military tradition. He is difficult to shake in his beliefs. He is, in short, an asshole.

There are some important distinctions among NCOs, however. They include the lifer versus the career man, the senior versus the junior, and the black versus the white.

THE LIFER IS SIMPLY AN EXAGGERATED case of the general NCO. He bellows, fumes, harasses, and believes what he has been told about communists, about how EM have to be repressed continually to make men out of them. These lifers have carried the process of internalizing military myth to the point of pink-elephant hallucination. The product is the kind of animal who orders basic trainees to walk over a fellow trainee who is obviously having convulsions. These lifers should be exterminated. They often become objects of struggle because of their intimate messing over of the day-to-day life of the EM.

Career NCOs tend to be cynical about everything. Sometimes they can be talked into doing an EM favors on an individual basis. They will not stick their neck out. Sometimes they will look the other way, however. They are sad cases of degenerate human beings, whose asses tend to spread until they slip over both sides of the seats of their chairs as they drown in coffee.

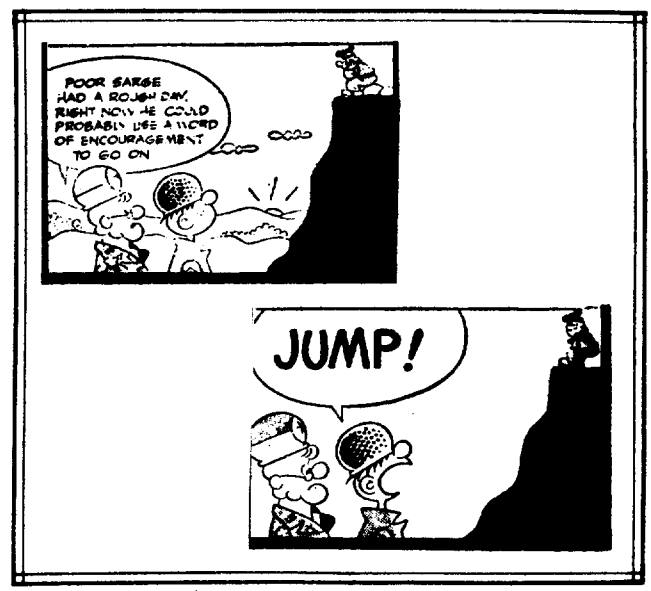
Junior NCOs often plan on getting out at the end of their current enlistment. They are unreliable usually, since they are after a clean record above all. Sometimes they get mad enough to do something, but not often.

Many black NCOs are examples of capitulation to racism. Fearing to confront discrimination head on, they hide their heads under Uncle Sam's beard like other NCOs. As a group they are the most defeatist and cynical about the army. They are fully aware of racism, but fear to do anything about it. In contrast, many white NCOs actively seek ego-gratification and actually come to believe the racist patriotic horseshit spouted in the classes on subversion and espionage. Naturally NCOs vary widely individually. But none of them can really be relied on to carry any struggle through to the end. Any movement they lead is doomed to be half-assed, non-militant, and a loser in the long run. Although there are some friendly forces among NCOs, they must be kept in the background of any struggle.

Despite their qualitatively different backgrounds, then, junior officers and NCOs play a common role in the class struggle in the armed forces.

Then, of course, come the enlisted men and women. Here is where the action is. The distinction between the draftee and the enlisted man is insignificant. Most enlisted personnel were tricked into joining, or forced as a last resort in their efforts to find a job. They universally discover that the recruiter was a lying SOB, and they are sometimes madder than the draftee at having been shanghaied into a slave army.

There are important differences among the EM, however, which themselves are based largely on the class background of the EM. Students and workers were drafted into the Vietnam era army, and the dichotomy this represents in terms of background is translated into the clerk/grunt stratification. Often, the students do the office jobs, the workers the shit work. Not that many students escape, but some end up in a relatively powerful position, such as filling out the morning report and leave requests. The combination of their class background and the working condition this background leads them into in the service can lead them into an erroneous alliance with the brass or NCOs. Not that this is the dominant form of clerk. Most of them hate the army as much as the young workers, and are reliable in struggle.



WORKERS—MAIN FORCE FOR CHANGE

But at the core of any struggle is the grunt. The basic soldier. The man with the gun. The man with the wrench. The woman with the bedpan. The woman within the typing pool. The man with the cigarette-butt detail. The person being harassed for the length of hair. Like in society at large, blacks are overrepresented in these the crappiest jobs in the service, the jobs most likely to get you killed. It is within this group that you find people willing to wholeheartedly fight the brass. It is within this group that one finds people with some trade union experience which they can bring to bear in organizing the fight.

GIs are mainly young, full of fight, and ready to go. But because of their youth, they do not have the kind of stable ties that marriage provides and that maturity brings, so often they are somewhat unstable in the fight. The army uses this fact, of course, and builds on it by frequent transfers, preventing the formation of a solid footing for the young soldier, trying to get him to identify with the unit as a whole (including officers and NCOs) rather than with his fellow GI. But despite these shortcomings, the soldiers form a militant section of the working class. Communists must join the service to provide an alternative structure and leadership to the GIs who are ready to fight.

THE FRIENDS, THEN ARE THE GIs. THE enemy is the top brass, fronting for their capitalist bosses (often being the same class as the capitalist bosses, tied together financially, socially, and politically). In between lie servants of the brass, whose loyalities in some cases may be undermined. As the struggle sharpens, as in Vietnam, the defections to the side of the GIs increase as the junior officers and NCOs try to protect themselves opportunistically. Occasionally, high ranking officers will make concessions. But we should not be fooled. There is a qualitative difference between the field grade officer who agrees, in the face of a mutiny, to pull back, and the young sergeant who resists taking men into the field. For the former, a frag is required. For the latter, watchfulness and struggle. For the day-to-day struggle, we must rely on the GIs almost exclusively. In some particularly sharp situation, some other strata of the armed forces will fall in behind the lead of militant GIs.

WHAT ARE THE GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ISSUES TO STRUGGLE OVER?

In the work of PL in the industrial working class, the issues are much clearer than elsewhere. The struggle is direct. Whatever the bosses get, the workers lose. When safety conditions improve, the boss loses profits since he has to pay for the improvement. When the workers get a shorter work-week, the reproduction of surplus-value is lessened. But the army is not the same kind of institution that a factory is.

The end goal is the total destruction of the armed forces. This is different than destroying a factory. The factory produces the means of subsistence; the army only provides the framework within which the production of surplus-value is guaranteed. It is a tool of the bosses, used to preserve their system. Any slogan to change its use—without overthrowing the system—is reactionary—such as the revisionist Communist Party calling for the troops out of Vietnam and into Selma.

The struggle inside the army takes on a two-fold character. There is the struggle against our **use** (as a boss's tool), and there is the struggle against our **lot.** The struggles complement each other. The fight against riot duty aids the rebels, and it also inhibits our being put into a personally dangerous situation. This struggle is both in our direct self-interest, and it is also in our long-run class interest.

NOW IF THE ARMY IS A TOTALLY REACtionary organization, why struggle to improve the life of the soldier within it? Doesn't that merely buck up the system's ability to keep itself going? The holders of this sectarian viewpoint fail to realize the interrelation of self-interest and class interest of GIs opposing the brass. They do not understand the dialectic outlined above. Perhaps most important of all, any struggle against the brass which builds the possibility of unity among GIs provides a training ground for communists and revolutionaries, and helps break down the fears that potential revolutionaries are imbued with from the day they're inducted. So reforms—including structural reforms, such as changing the UCMJ—are struggles which communists can correctly build. After all, no reform in and of itself produces revolutionary consciousness. It's in the process of struggle itself that such consciousness can be developed to its highest form by communist involvement. Practice is primary.

This was a lesson that PL learned in its struggles in the service. The development of this understanding, and the development of the communist-led struggle in the armed forces, is at the core of the following history.

THE PARTICULAR SITUATION IN TODAY'S ARMY—RACISM

Black GIs took the lead in Vietnam in fighting back. Their experience in ghetto rebellions of the 60s served them well in leading mutinies and rebellions on the front lines, where they were inevitably sent by the racist brass. For example, an all-black unit on patrol in the mountains in Vietnam was visited (via helicopter) by several staff officers. They harassed the black soldiers about their shoes (not shiny enough) and the ragged appearance of the unit operating in the boonies. The response? Several of the soldiers organized to shoot down the helicopter when it took off. All the staff officers were killed.

This kind of rebellion was repeated literally hundreds of times. It was this rebellion which undermined the ability of the U.S. government to use GIs to fight their class brothers and sisters in Nam.

The bosses tried to undermine the anti-war movement by ending the draft and replacing it with the "Modern Volunteer Army" (MVA). MVA was billed as a modernization of the army, with beer in the barracks and more freedom. Those Volunteer Army (VOLAR) experiments were quickly scrapped. MVA was rapidly exposed as an effort to bribe young workers, especially blacks, into the army by razzle dazzle bonuses and benefits. Now it is clearer than ever that conditions in the army are deteriorating, with hospital cutbacks and increased harassment (Basic Training has been extended from two months to 6 months.) MVA stands as a cynical effort to take advantage of unemployment, to bring in vastly disproportionate numbers of unemployed black workers.

REBELLIONS AND LARGE NUMBERS (VIA MVA) make black soldiers a real threat to the brass. They rely heavily on racism to put over their game. If troops are divided by race, then white GIs won't follow the lead of black rebels, and may even be induced to attack them. The working class in general will not struggle against deteriorating conditions in the service if racism carries the day.

The key to the GI movement is anti-racism fought for by multi-racial organization. This spells the success or failure of the anti-brass movement. The issue of racism runs like a thread through the GI work of the party. In a sense this history is the history of figuring out how to defeat racism and put the brass up against the wall.

GI JOE's A RED!

Davis, the first PLer in the army, formed study groups in his barracks. He was constantly transferred from unit to unit, as the brass tried to undermine his base. But, with each transfer, he kept the old contacts and developed new ones, so that a significant base for PL developed, and a mass underground newspaper (The Last Harass) was published with the participation of dozens of GIs.

The army decided to get rid of him through an administrative discharge in the face of this stepped up activity. His hearings were packed with sympathetic GIs, something the army tried to prevent by holding the hearings at weird hours. Despite his support and his efforts **to stay in,** Davis was railroaded out of the army in 12 hours, with his first sergeant personally escorting him around the post to clear his records. He was simultaneously given his discharge papers, and a notice of eviction from the post as a civilian.

The lesson we learned here was that good political work could be done in the army. The brass were weaker and the GIs more receptive than we had initially estimated. PL saw the main contradiction in the world to be between U.S. imperialism and the Vietnamese liberation struggle; naturally the result of the Davis experience in that context meant sending more cadres into the service, and expanding our overall army work.

PUT THE ARMY ON TRIAL!

Although there were many more cadre involved in developing work similar to Davis', the real qualitative change came at Ft. Dix in 1970. We had a serious collective for the first time. The party operation consisted of one club, an off-post center, and support work from New York City. The political line of the party was **"Smash the Bosses' Armed Forces."** The program included roughly 15 demands, from an abolition of article 15 non-judicial punishment to an end to riot duty to the right to refuse to fight in Vietnam. Taken together the demands would have meant the total destruction of the armed forces. The line came from the correct political evaluation that the army was a totally reactionary institution which had to be destroyed lock, stock and barrel. PL also argued, however, that efforts to reform the army were reactionary. This notion is one-sided and sectarian. While it was correct to point to the destruction of the armed forces as a goal of revolutionary forces, we really failed to do more than pay lip service to some of the concrete problems that GIs face in the service, which could be attenuated by communist-led reform struggles.

Reform struggles in the army (or anywhere, for that matter) build illusions. But it is precisely in those reform struggles which include broad numbers of people that communists can most successfully raise higher-level issues, such as imperialism in Vietnam, and the joint need of U.S. and Vietnamese workers to fight for socialism.

This sectarian political line manifested itself at Fort Dix in the uncreative way the party related to its base of support. Challenge Clubs, which were explicitly led by the party, and which were oriented around revolutionary agitation, were the only "mass" organizations the party seriously developed. In terms of political line, the sectarianism was reflected in opposing any use of UCMJ rights in defense trials, relying one-sidely on all-out courtroom attack, in some cases pleading guilty with pride. Long after this political line was modified, a PLer in the army refused to press charges against a drill sergeant who struck him in full view of his company, on the grounds that such action would build illusions about the military judicial system! What it really built was confusion and some doubts about the guts of the PLer.

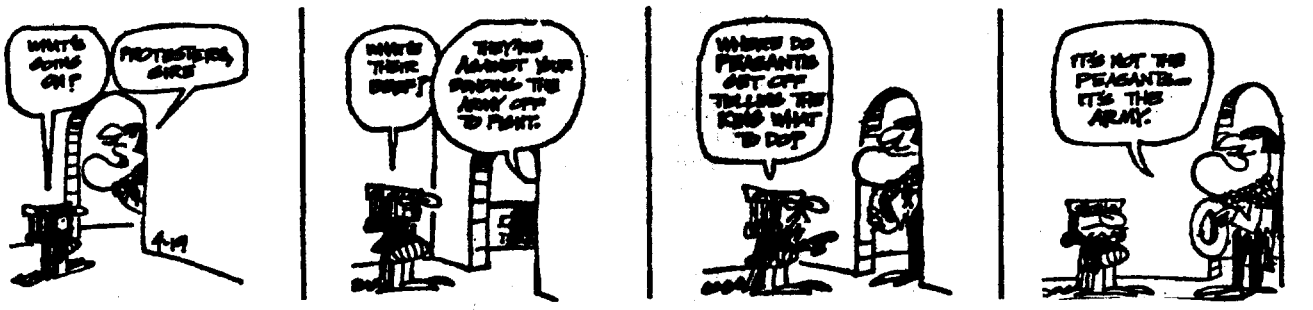
With these limitations in mind, however, the party developed some remarkably strong, militant, multi-racial and mass struggles at Fort Dix. We had taken the approach of organizing around particular points of the program, particularly around the issue of racist harassment by the brass. We initiated a struggle around the trumped-up courtmartial of PVT Marinez.

MARTINEZ WAS ACCUSED OF SHOOTING HIS foot to get out of the service. Here is a young GI, on guard duty in the rain with the rifle slung pointing downward, under his poncho (all according to regulations)—and his rifle goes off into his foot. It happens sometimes. But the brass saw this incident as an opportunity to courtmartial him because of his having begun working with a Challenge Club.

The party held meetings with other GIs in barracks, in laundromats, in Pemberton (a nearby base town); a leafletting campaign was conducted on post illegally, off post legally, and at the Port Authority in New York. The leaflet called for GIs to denounce this racist attack and to pack the courtroom. The courtroom confrontation which followed scared the brass to death, and they dropped all the charges against Martinez.

A crucial factor in this victory was the militancy of GIs under communist leadership.

> We really saw in this trial that military courts (or civilian courts) can never serve the people. They aren't meant to... The


WHAT'S GOING ON?
PROTESTERS, SIR!
4-71
WHERE THEIR BRAINS?
THEY'RE AGAINST YOUR SENDING THE ARMY OFF TO FIGHT.
WHERE DO PEASANTS GET OFF TELLING THE KING WHAT TO DO?
IT'S NOT THE PEASANTS— IT'S THE ARMY.

brass would not let us in to watch the trial. In fact, they tried to hold the trial without us knowing it!

We went into the courtroom anyway, past an armed guard. The officer judge stopped the trial and called the MPs to remove us . . .

After the trial another Lt. Colonel ordered us out of the building. When we told him we were waiting for Martinez he assured us that he would take care of Martinez for two months and we didn't trust him to start doing it now. He blew up and screamed to a WAC lifer to call the MPs. In seconds 16 cop cars and 2 paddy wagons pulled up. They had a traffic jam in the street, almost running into each other. The army was really scared to death of 12 GIs sticking together and fighting racism. (**Challenge-Desafio,** Aug. 24, 1970, p. 11.)

Out of this struggle, several GIs were consolidated into Challenge Clubs, and the threat to the peace and tranquility of Ft. Dix sharpened up. The brass intensified their attacks, arresting a party member in a classic entrapment:

> . . .one night, P.B. was talking to some brothers in doughboy field on post. After two hours he said, 'Wow, I forgot to show you something.' He was just reaching in his pocket for the "Challenge" leaflet when two CID agents (one of the three forms of Army FBI) arrested all 3 of them. **(Self Criticism of the Dix Collective,** p. 3)

OUR SUCCESS AROUND THE MARTINEZ CASE had helped us develop a stronger capability to fight the brass. Twenty-five GIs came to testify as "character witnesses" at P.B. trial (many of them never having met him). P.B., acting as his own lawyer, turned the courtmartial into a sharp political attack on the army. "After awhile the judge ran out of the courtroom saying we didn't understand that 'This is the U.S. Army'." **(Challenge-Desafio,** Oct. 5, 1970)

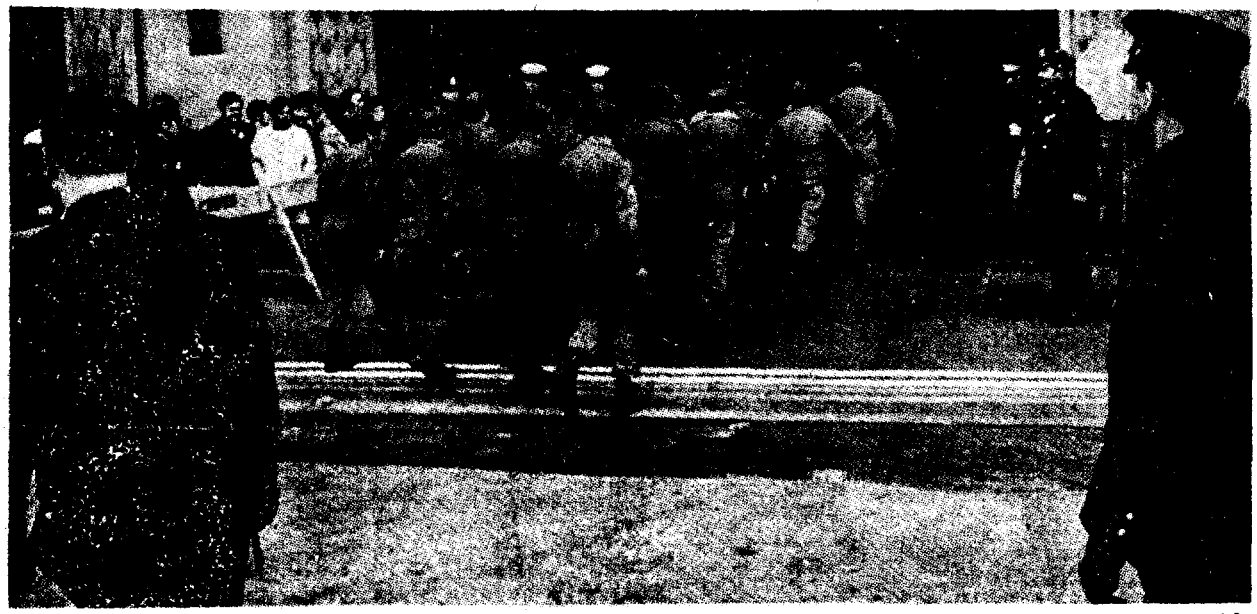
The trial was postponed to an unspecified date, and then rushed up into a Saturday with a few hours' notice to P.B. This time P.B. refused to go into the courtroom because he had had time to rally only about 15 supporters; he was not going in until all of his character witnesses were present. The MPs proceeded to attack the 15 GIs and GI wives, re-arresting P.B. and arresting two more GIs. Meanwhile, P.B. was found guilty, sentenced to 30 days and loss of pay. The people arrested were placed in pretrial confinement in solitary.

The best defense is a good offense. Turning the attack around, the Challenge Clubs took to the streets of the base town, rallying GIs all night long, selling 100 Challenges, passing out hundreds of leaflets explaining what had happened, collecting money for the defense fund from GIs and, most importantly, meeting more people interested in building the fight against the boss's armed forces.

> So we organized for his court-martial, around defending a communist. The center (non-PLP) put forward the position that they were attacking P.B. and PLP because we were telling the truth and the Army was scared. The Party was sharper, the center was stronger, and the approach was more militant. So on Aug. 19 there were 20 GIs and 5 civilians present at the court-martial of P.B. We said we were going into the courtroom—all of us. Unlike the last time where we submitted to the rules and went in one by one. The brass said 'No,' but we went right on in. We were together, and we had leafleted the surrounding barracks, and we knew the guys were with us. They were all SPDer/GIs awaiting courtmartials, and all forms of protest are familiar to them. They had just had a 200-man demonstration in the middle of the night to get a recreation room in their company.
>
> So we knew we had the GIs behind us. When the GIs testified they told the brass exactly what they felt. And when they tried to exclude some from the court we threw three officers out to make room for them. We cheered, and attacked the judge in the court, and really took over and put the representatives of imperialism on trial. So they recessed. (**Self-Criticism,** p. 3)

The fight to defeat the attacks on the three GIs was the strongest fight yet. It included 40 GIs, and combined militant courtroom tactics with wide publicity throughout the post, and was beginning to link up with the perennial rebellion in SPD.

> There are a billion examples of how GIs politically attacked the Colonel Judge and the panel of 7 officers. J.P. went up and saluted the panel with a partial "Heil Hitler" and a loud clicking of heels. The judge told V.R. to stop talking about Puerto



New York City, 1970. A platoon of Ft. Dix GI's march into a post office to sort mail during a nationwide postal worker's strike.

Rican gangs organizing to fight the landlords because it was irrelevant. V.R. kept right on talking even while the judge was telling him to shut up. When L.O. was sworn in and asked if he promised to tell the truth he said, "If I am allowed to and not interrupted." During the questioning of the panel the lawyer asked Lt. Colonel Harding if he knew what communism was and he said no. GIs yelled, "Why not, you taught us lies about it in basic training." And when M.M. testified he said, "Lt. Colonel Harding here calls himself a leader among men. And if he doesn't know what communism is and he leads millions of GIs to fight it, then he must be just a sadistic murderer." When an MP testified that H.P. was a "big man, and it took 2 of our best available MPs to apprehend him," the audience almost brought the rafters down with cheers. When K.P. testified that women aren't sex objects but can and do fight back, and that it felt good to have kicked an MP in the face, the audience went wild. J.P. told of all the CID harassment (he had been beaten, picked up 25 times and threatened with two drawn .45s).

Attorney: Have you knuckled under?

JP: Are you putting me on?

Attorney: What will be your response to continued harassment?

JP: (leaping out of the witness stand with fist raised) I'll fight the bastards all the way!!!

Despite heavy sentences for the two PLers involved (the non-PLer was acquitted—a victory in itself), the GIs vowed to continue the struggle. The next day, two of the "character witnesses" led 20 guys in their companies to complain to the IG about racism and harassment in their company. The same group surrounded one of the officers on the jury, berating him for being a pig.

UNDER THE PARTY'S LEAD, FT. DIX HAD become a tinderbox. Nevertheless, serious weaknesses undermined our ability to consolidate and move on to higher victories. Perhaps the most vital problem was a lack of faith in the people, which led to bossiness and a lack of struggle. Through internal party struggle and several public self-criticisms to the base of support, much of the damage was undone, and the party began to develop a solid base and mature politically itself. Unfortunately, the persistance of these and other errors prevented us from recruiting significant numbers into the party. Unless the party is built, the mass struggle inevitably declines. Unless the party is built, cadre can be moved around by the brass and a movement undermined. This failure then may have been the crucial one for the Ft. Dix work.

There was also a lack of a long-term perspective in this work. Unless revolution is imminent—not our viewpoint—it is crucial to be developing a long-term ongoing campaign around certain reform issues. This must go beyond saying "end racism" and then engaging in specific struggles around it. It is good to do even that—but a long-range plan is a necessity for developing a long-term outlook.

Underlying this lack of long-term planning was our notion of "Army Exceptionalism." Anything which happens in the army is wonderful, because the army is the "front line," where fascism reigns. While it is true that conditions in the service are slightly different than in industry, the ability to carry out open political activity is still there, and it can be developed as our experience told us. But it was a hard lesson to fully absorb.

GIs ARE WORKERS: NO ARMY EXCEPTIONALISM!

The first effort to overcome army exceptionalism was to try to link the GI struggle directly with working class struggle at the point of production. This was a concrete effort to defeat "GI consciousness" as opposed to working class consciousness. The Ft. Dix Challenge Clubs began making visits to the strikelines of auto workers. Leaflets distributed on post and at the Port Authority began to express the need to link together concretely the two kinds of struggle—in the army and in industry. In a leaflet entitled **"WAR—What is it good for? It depends,"** put out to build for the courtmartial trial of P.B., began,

> On Sept. 14, 350,000 auto workers in the U.S. and Canada went out on strike against General Motors. Thousands of other workers may go out against Ford and Chrysler —even though the union leaders want only GM struck. These workers are fighting for better wages and benefits and an end to lay-offs and killing speed-up, against some of the largest corporations in the world. The auto strike is one of the major battles in the class struggle—workers vs. bosses—with both sides ready for a long strike.
>
> What does the auto strike have to do with GIs in the army? Everything: the same rich bosses who run the auto plants and make billions off the workers' backs, make more billions by using GIs to fight over in Vietnam to defend their investments and steal natural resources there. These bosses pay such low wages ($1.40 a day in Saigon is maximum legal wage—labor unions are illegal) that they have to use GIs to fight the Vietnamese when they rebel against these rotten conditions.
>
> Second, these auto bosses are laying workers off like crazy, just as other bosses are doing everywhere. Many GIs joined the army because they couldn't find a decent job on the outside and the army lied about how good it was on the inside (join the Army —see the World—be a Man—Learn to Lead —and all the other Lies). Job prospects for GIs who are getting out are worse and worse.

The leaflet continued by discussing the role of troops against striking workers. The second portion of the leaflet dealt with the P.B. courtmartial. The leaflet concluded with two slogans: GIs—REFUSE TO SCAB IN THE AUTO STRIKE IF TROOPS ARE CALLED OUT! THEIR FIGHT IS OUR FIGHT TOO! FIGHT THE ARMY! COME TO THE COURTMARTIAL!

A month later, two carloads of GIs were organized to go down to the picket lines in Trenton, N.J. One of the cars was stopped by the MPs, and its occupants held by the MPs to prevent them from going. The rest of the GIs went to the lines, got a permit from the union office to join the lines:

> We asked questions and got quite a good response from the workers. The general feeling was that we were welcome there; they were really happy that GIs were on their side. Two black women said that we had a lot of courage to go AWOL to support them.
>
> Union leaders kept driving up to us in brand new Cadillacs (which explains why they give out such stingy funds) to see if we were passing out any 'literature.' They were afraid we would talk to the workers about organizing real unions that the workers lead.
>
> When we left, the workers thanked us for coming and said they hoped we'd come back soon.
>
> We made a big mistake in not going to the picket lines sooner as the strike ended shortly afterwards. We should have been more vigorous in organizing other GIs to seeing the need for a GI-worker alliance. We must win GIs to refuse to let the bosses use us against other workers, as in the Post Office strike and the threat used in the railroad strike. GIs must fight with the workers, not against them. (**Challenge-Desafio,** Jan. 4, 1971)

This activity was a good development in trying to raise the level of consciousness among active GIs, but the notion of integrating the GI work with main mass line of the party through making racist unemployment the main issue for GIs to fight on still failed to grasp the essential point—the need for a mass line applicable directly to the situation of GIs in the army.

Nevertheless, the tying together of racism, harassment and imperialism in the service with unemployment and racism in society in general was useful. Many GIs participated in the big March 20 unemployment demonstrations around the country, led by PL. GIs came from Ft. Dix, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Ft. Hood, Ft. Ord, and several other posts, putting on a skit demonstrating the divide-and-conquer character of racism in the service, and how the struggle against it can lead to unity against the brass in general. The GIs who came had played leading roles in many struggles on their posts. Through events like this massive unemployment march, involving over 6000 people, the party was able to develop the understanding of the GIs new to political work, encouraging the relatively small GI groups at each post to sharpen the struggle when they returned.

Despite a lot of hard struggle, good work, and some counter attacks, PL cadre had still failed to develop the mass inroads necessary to carrying out a communist program. The National Committee made the evaluation that the sectarian policy of forming narrow Challenge Clubs instead of more broadly based mass organizations came from the underlying weakness of opportunism. Specifically, PL cadre were scared. This fear—which is not abnormal, and is precisely what the army relies on to continue its activities—had been fed historically by the leadership's errors in mis-estimating the objective situation in the army.

> We believed it was extremely difficult to do much of anything in the Army. We seri-

ously underestimated the militancy of the GIs and their receptiveness to communist ideas, while at the same time we overestimated the Army's ability to stop us. Based on this mis-estimation, we had the approach of keeping fairly quiet, "being a good soldier" and maintaining secrecy.
—Nat'l Committee Report on Army Work.

It took many months for this incorrect evaluation to be overcome. The struggle in the army as a whole was therefore held back because the only revolutionary organization active in the army—PLP—had fallen prey to an overestimation of the brass and an underestimation of the willingness of the GIs to fight. This was precisely the lesson of the self-criticism from the Ft. Dix Collective. There the fear of the army and the lack of faith in the people had led to various commandist errors which, when the struggle sharpened up, led to several very good militants falling away.

THE BEST EXAMPLE OF FEAR AUGMENTED by an erroneous line was in Vietnam, where many PLPers just kept quiet. Yet there the struggle was the sharpest. Our line was fraternization with the "opposing" forces. Beyond a few leaflets in Vietnamese and English, this was not carried out, even though the level of struggle included fraggings, mutinies, and much more. Much of the weaknesses can be attributed to isolation from collectives, inexperience of cadre, the middle class background of most of the army cadre. But fundamentally the problem remained the failure to have become convinced that relying on the people—here the fellow GI—was the road to revolution.

This evaluation in the summer of '71 led to a decision to up the ante in the army work, and broaden our United Front work **inside** the army. While our long-run objective of destroying the armed forces as a part of the capitalist state remained, new emphasis was placed on the broader issues of racism, UCMJ abuses, and harassment.

In Vietnam, in Germany, and in many bases in the U.S., spontaneous struggle against the brass, particularly around the issue of racism, was very sharp, much like the ghetto rebellions of the '60s. In some cases bases were burned. In many instances, thousands were involved in riots on a single base. Stockade rebellions were endemic. Most struggle which erupts in response to the abuses of capitalism is unorganized, lacks ideological clarity, and inevitably falls victim to one or another of the bosses' ruses. Such struggle requires a communist party to give it direction and staying power. Our party's failure to boldly lead such action is more serious than simply "missing the boat." We probably did not have enough cadre in the right places to qualitatively alter the course of the spontaneous rebellions. Nevertheless, we could have made a significant difference were it not for the weaknesses which the National Committee diagnosed as disguised opportunism. As it was, we still played a leading role in many struggles and we stimulated anti-imperialist sentiment and actions among thousands of GIs.

THE LIBERAL-LED "GI" MOVEMENT

Revisionist and liberal activity in the service was sparse. The volatile situation in the service made it dangerous to the revisionists to try to establish a nationwide organization of GIs, since such a movement would inevitably get out of hand and jeopardize their ties with the liberal bourgeoisie, expose their counter-revolutionary role, and, since PLP would be there putting forward a militant program, they would rapidly lose any leadership of the GI movement. (At one SMC-the Trotskyite Student Mobilization Committee-conference in Cleveland, the entire GI contingent swung over to support the anti-racist, anti-imperialist slogans put forward by SDS. That's just a small taste of what would have happened if the revisionists had had some kind of broader vision for GI organizing.) Additionally the commitment to struggle of most of the revisionist cadre was lacking, smothered by elitist phrasemongering, so that they were unable to build a base. Consequently, most revisionist activity was from the sidelines. They would parasitically leech onto coffeehouses. Naturally, when super-star Jane Fonda visited, hundreds of GIs would show up. But these two-bit phonies were too fearful of the GIs to use even these events to consolidate new members into GI organizations.

The coffeehouses and storefronts themselves varied enromously in terms of the people who ran them. Such places inevitably had two aspects. On the one hand, they were escapist. They helped people get out of the service, in many cases were heavily into drugs and drug culture, and often were negative about the potential of GIs to do anything to **fight** the army. On the other hand there were many honest civilians and GIs who were involved in the coffeehouses/storefronts, and who hated the army and were open to struggle. It was the lack of leftist GI leadership which often left the coffeehouses dominated by the liberal/pacifist/revisionist forces, who led any mass movement to a dead-end. In fact, most of the mass outbursts mentioned above passed the coffeehouses by without so much as a tip of the hat.

Some of the storefronts had made efforts at GI organizing, but they came at it from an elitist, anti-working class background. They would finally close down, condemning the GIs as apathetic, deadened, and hopelessly intimidated. Never did a coffeehouse or storefront publish a self-criticism about their lack of involvement in struggle, about their counter-cultural anti-working class tendencies.

Take FTA, one of the first underground GI newspapers. When it folded in May, 1972, one of the organizers wrote a letter to CAMP News:

> The key factor in the folding of the project was the total apathy among the enlisted men. It was difficult to get people to write articles and help with the production. There was never any feedback, and believe it or not, I was almost beat up by a group of trainees while distributing the paper in Louisville.

I have several notions of why this is happening . . . With the decrease in the threat of the draft, there are very few college graduates or men with a college background coming in. In their place are numerous 17- and 18-year olds . . . the new recruits are not interested in bringing about social or political change. They are more concerned in balling the chick at the PX (their words, not mine), buying a new car, and drinking Boone's Farm Wine. (CAMP News, Dec. 15, 1972, Vol. III #12)

Another paper called The Other Voice published at Richard-Gebaur AFB folded with the following denunciation of GIs:

We learned a lot about people in doing the **Other Voice.** We saw and heard the 'bitchers,' those chronic complainers who froth at the mouth about what should or should not be done, but are nowhere to be found when words are translated into actions . . . .

We saw the dopers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the dopers for their zero contribution to the **Other Voice.** These are the people who should know what is going on, but would rather stumble-bumble from one day to the next. Their only ambition in life is to cloud the mind in a cloak of drugs and avoid facing the boogie man—reality. (CAMP News, Sept. 72, Vol. III #9)

In the same two issues of CAMP News, there are, respectively, stories about an active duty chapter of VVAW at Ft. Lewis taking 40 GIs and supporters to confront Rep. Hicks over his racist investigation of the Constellation rebellion, the victory of the mass movement to free Billy Smith, and stories on widespread naval rebellions; and articles about VVAW agitation at the Republican Convention among Ft. Bragg 82nd Airborne troops and the positive response it received, the building of an organized campaign at Aberdeen Proving Grounds against a racist frame-up, and the formation of a Black Servicemen's Caucus in San Diego. No lack of struggle here! But the above mentioned "organizers" suffer from a one sided view of GIs. Only college-educated types are together enough to get involved, while weaknesses which most young working class GIs have cannot be struggled with and overcome. The biggest weakness was the "organizer's" internal weakness of despising GIs!

The contradiction within the storefront/coffeehouse aspect of the GI movement cannot be avoided. It had to be dealt with. PL had failed to deal with it, assuring that only the schmucks were really involved in the coffeehouse/storefront route. Again, we had shown a lack of faith in the people.

There are plenty of problems involved in joining in with a movement often dominated by escapist, anti-working class ideology. But the resolution of the contradiction in favor of working class struggle was an implicit task set by the decision of the National Committee to expand our united front work in the armed forces.

THE FT. HOOD BREAKTHROUGH

The Ft. Hood coffeehouse was a good case in point of the contradictions of the GI movement. Fair numbers of GI activists would go there, but the civilian leadership was cliqueish and pot-headed by and large. The coffeehouse carried on military counseling and provided a base for anti-war activity. It was not initially militant.

PLP joined the coffeehouse group, bringing around the militant GIs they had been working with. A breakthrough occurred as a solid militant united front emerged.

Previously PL had been involved in fighting a racist frame-up, involving about 25 GIs in court-room struggle similar to the Ft. Dix events.

Non-commissioned officers spread the story among whites that Sanders was a troublemaker—hoping to encourage the racist lie that all blacks are troublemakers . . . they deserve what they get.

But this racist plan was defeated as GIs discussed the attack and organized a spirited counter-offensive. When the brass tried to rush through the courtmartial on two hours' notice, seven GIs showed up and forced them to postpone the trial . . . Then nearly half my unit was there, 12 black and 12 white GIs. Witnesses pointed out how racism was a regular policy in the army, and how officers and lifers—including the "neutral judge" Casias-had spread racist lies.

Casias then tried using anti-communism to split us up, since the racism was backfiring. He attacked a PLP member who testified. But this attack was about as successful as the recent Laos invasion. PLP literature is widely read and respected in the company.

. . . Fifteen of the people who attended the courtmartial came to the PLP-sponsored March against Racist Unemployment in Houston, March 20. There GIs, workers and students from all over the South united against the class enemy, the big bosses. We returned to Ft. Hood determined to organize many more GIs to fight the ruling class' U.S. army in solidarity with the struggle of all working people. (**Challenge-Desafio,** Mayday, 1971, p. 9)

Clearly a solid action, clearly carrying out the development of militant, anti-racist struggle, but subject to all the limitations of this kind of reactive politics which the Ft. Dix work had. By September, however, the party's united front relations with the coffeehouse people had led to a great leap ahead.

Two stockade rebel leaders were being brought up on charges with possible 10-year sentences. Fort Hood United Front (FHUF) argued that the rebellion had been correct and justified, and that Priest and Harvey should be freed. Denied permits for a demonstration in the base town,

the United Front had to decide either to call illegal actions to free Harvey and

Priest or to drop the campaign and go back to coffeehouse-as-usual activities. A picnic was called at a nearby lake to bring together many GIs to decide on a course of action. Dozens of leafletters announcing the picnic were harassed by city cops, and two Challenge sellers . . . were arrested.

At the picnic, people decided to have a motorcade back into town, and taped signs saying "Free Harvey and Priest," "Smash the Brass " and "Fight Racism " to their cars. As we proceeded, asking other cars to turn their lights on and follow us, the motorcade grew to over 30 cars. Cops following front and rear decided to move in and make some arrests to intimidate people. The whole motorcade came to a halt as people got out to challenge the cops' actions and pull them off one motorcyclist they were beating and handcuffing. The cops responded by pulling out riot shotguns. A few miles further on they pulled over the lead vehicle for 'improper use of the horn.' This time when the rest of the motorcade halted, there was a mass bust as people fought back against the racist cops. Altogether, 32 were arrested and warrants issued for two more persons arrested the next day. (**Challenge-Desafio,** Oct. 16, 1971, p. 11)

The army dropped its charges against Priest and Harvey! 60 GIs attended the next hastily called FHUF meeting, and the level of struggle rose. Within two months a militant demonstration of over 200 GIs, GI wives, and veterans was held, with mass arrests again following, around the slogans: Avenge Attica/U.S. out of Vietnam Now/ Free all political prisoners.

There were still plenty of weaknesses in FHUF. There was still widespread drug use. Racism had not been dealt with effectively by organizing black GIs into FHUF in a mass way. Blacks had led in militant action in response to the beating of a fellow GI by attacking the MPs, burning the battalion commander's office and car, and confronting the riot police. Yet few of these militant fighters had been involved in FHUF, reflecting the racism which still divided the GIs.

Nevertheless, the liberal/pacifist/revisionist political line (reflected in SMC-led demonstrations once a year) had been broken by the militant actions around the stockade rebels and by the militant anti-imperialist demonstration. A militant, ongoing approach to the struggle became the dominant attitude in FHUF.

This transformation laid the basis for a long-range project around racist base housing (tenants' organizing), and for a sharp action on Armed Farces Day, May 20, 1972. (Armed Farces Day had been initiated some years earlier by CAMP News as a kind of GI Mayday, where GI projects, organizations and supporters would demonstrate their collective strength on the same day throughout the country.)

Armed Farces Day at Ft. Hood demonstrated precisely the kind of serious ongoing work that was necessary to develop a fighting GI movement.

Organized Servicemen Abroad Intensify Drive Against Racism

By THOMAS A. JOHNSON
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 18 — The founder of a confederation of groups of militant black soldiers in Germany said today that organized servicemen, blacks and whites, had moved from a "position of conciliation to revolutionary, defensive and violent stands" because of continued racism in the armed services.

Samuel Berry, a former sergeant at the Patton Barracks in Heidelberg, was the final witness in the last session of an ad hoc three-day hearing on "racism in the military" held by the Congressional Black Caucus in the Rayburn Office Building.

Mr. Berry, currently a political science student at Bowie State College in Maryland, told the hearing that "the level of intensity and potential for violence" had heightened in recent years and that groups of black and radical white soldiers "are poised and ready to raise the level of the struggle to a defensive, violent stand."

Rally at Heidelberg

He said this was the result of "frustrations" over attempts to end racism and the groups' feeling that "military officials will only act favorably if we act as a group in an unfavorable manner."

While a noncommissioned officer in a signal battalion attached to Seventh Army headquarters in Germany, Mr. Berry founded the Unsatisfied Black Soldier, the first of a succession of extra-legal groups that protested discrimination in promotions, assignments, housing and recreational facilities.

A protest rally on July 4, 1970, brought nearly 1,000 soldiers, most of whom were black, to the Heidelberg University campus. Radical white groups have since been formed, and a number of underground soldier newspapers — some published with the help of radical German student groups — have flourished.

Mr. Berry, who said he had kept in close contact with these groups since his discharge a year ago, said there were 20 black organizations in 10 German cities allied with "all segments of progressive thinking people."

Representative Ronald V. Dellums of California, who shared the chair at the hearings with Representative Shirley Chisholm, of Brooklyn, listed 10 recommendations made during the hearings that the caucus would seek to implement.

These included pressing legislation that would give federal courts jurisdiction over suspected military offenders; advocating more black officers in command positions; promoting the evaluation of the following: military equal opportunity programs and training procedures, military regulations that have had negative effects on racial minorities, and the punishment of black G.I.'s for expressions of black pride.

At the rally GIs spoke of building a fight against the Army's system of 'justice'-especially pre-trial confinement and the Article 15 system which gives tremendous arbitrary power to company commanders. These demands also hit at racism, since both pre-trial and Article 15s are used especially against black GIs.

A GI wife told of efforts to build a Tenants' Council to fight for better housing conditions and an end to discrimination in rental. Cam Cunningham, a lawyer who worked with the Front, pointed out how the GI movement against military injustice had hampered the ability to make war—and how

only a general strike could prevent imperialist wars completely.

The militant spirit of this march contrasted sharply with the 'Peace Now' picnics which organizations like the SMC try to push on GIs. GIs had voted to bar SMC from speaking at this rally on account of their past record of selling out GI struggles. (At the last Fort Hood demonstration, 100 GIs and vets were jailed, while SMC members ran away.)

May 20th showed that the rulers' plans to rebuild the Army are off to a bad start. (**Challenge-Desafio**, June 29, 1972, p. 11)

In the Oct. 11 Ft. Hood report, the success of the FHUF activity was prefaced by a self-critical note.

> We made two sectarian errors vis-a-vis FHUF. The first was not to enter the group at all. ("It's a bunch of pacifists.") The second, after we started to work within FHUF, was to regard many people there as 'the right' because they put forward liberalism, wanted to ally with SMC, etc. But we found that we were really overestimating the hold which revisionist ideas had on these guys. It turned out that virtually everyone there, including the civilian 'movement' people, was open to our ideas . . . the main barrier to the work was our own sectarianism, not the liberalism and pacifism which it proved possible to defeat in struggle. (Oct. 11 Ft. Hood Collective internal, PLP)

The right-opportunism which the National Committee had pointed to as being masked under the sectarianism the report referred to had taken a decisive blow. Nevertheless, opportunism continued to crop up in its more usual form, that of failing to build the left in the process of mass struggle. The failure to win people into PL, not just to being militant, can spell the end of any organization which is fighting back.

> The main question now is building the party within FHUF. Defeating racism, nationalism and drugs should go along with this. There is clearly plenty of good center leadership. But building PL will be key to sustaining and improving the kind of united front actions we have been able to pull off. This is even more crucial since our collective has diminished—one member ETS'd, one gone to Nam. **Ibid.**

Our failure to carry out this crucial task meant that, when the rest of the party was moved out of Ft. Hood, the FHUF began to retreat from its militant position.

RACISM—THE FORT HOOD EXPERIENCE

Despite our efforts to build FHUF into an anti-racist fighting organization, the failure to win black GIs into the organization (with a few exceptions) meant FHUF had a serious weakness. Congressman Stokes came to Ft. Hood as part of the ruling class' efforts to pacify black rebels on posts around the country. The usual scenario would be that angry blacks would raise case after case of military racism, Stokes would listen, and then after he left the post those outspoken GIs would be harassed and isolated by the post commanders, despite promises of immunity. In a case at Ft. Dix, a Muslim was given extra harassment for 7 months, and his discharge as a CO was delayed this long, after he had sharply challenged racist practices at the post. Needless to say, his letters to congress brought only the usual formal response and no action. At Ft. Hood,

> Nov. 14 a member of the Black Congressional Caucus, Congressman Stokes came to Hood to 'investigate racism.' We (PL) put forward that congressmen are no good, etc., but the FHUF nevertheless decided to sponsor his visit. About 80 GIs, mostly black, showed up. In general, people had quite a lot of faith in the congressman. Some friends of ours put forward again at this meeting that he was a fraud—but this was a minority position there. But we also put forward that whether or not people trusted Stokes, there was a need for an **organization** to fight racism at Hood—and this met with general approval. That night Peoples' Justice Committee was formed—composed mostly of black GIs. Though virulent nationalist people had spoken loud and long at the earlier meeting, it turned out that among the people who were serious about building an organization nationalism was not that strong. So 1) PJC does not exclude white GIs and 2) will work together with the United Front. At this stage it is just getting organized but we think it has considerable potential.
>
> The next day Congressman Stokes made a really foul statement in which he praised the base commander for being 'sincere' and moving toward the solution of racial tensions. Result, most people involved now have greater respect for PL's position since we have, in effect, been proved right on this issue. FHUF and PJC put out a joint leaflet in response to General Seneff's statement about how he was working to correct racist inequity. This was a pretty good leaflet, with a class line on racism. (November 28 Ft. Hood Collective internal to PLP)

This auspicious beginning did not bear fruit over the ensuing months, largely because the FHUF failed to fight racism in terms of bringing the two organizations into either tight working unity or into one organization. The anti-racist ideology of FHUF did not get translated into practical day-to-day working alongside militant black GIs. Most FHUFers did not go with PLers to the PJC meetings. This failure accentuated nationalist sentiments in PJC. It also tended to isolate PJC from the broader movement going on. Eventually PJC degenerated into a small inactive clique. A large measure of the responsibility for this unfortunate development rests with the party's failure to win PJCers—as well as other black GIs—into FHUF, and with our failure to convince mainly white FHUF members to participate fully in PJC.

Achieving this would have welded the objective anti-racist struggles on post into organized rebellion.

Despite these weaknesses (party-building and racism), the Ft. Hood actions electrified the GI movement, which in its organized aspect tended to be small and agitational. It did not traditionally take militant actions. Ft. Hood stood as a refutation to every right winger who claimed that GIs wouldn't fight back or couldn't be organized to fight back stateside; it stood as a beacon to serious GI fighters everywhere of what could be accomplished. The importance of the party organization in making this kind of transformation possible cannot be overestimated.

FORT DIX, PHASE 2

Having absorbed the lessons of Ft. Hood, the party sent two PLPers into the service at Ft. Dix in late '71. They rapidly began developing barracks-based practical and ideological struggle. This is the basic core of any broader movement.

Basic training is a peculiar period of army life. It is not designed to train you in any traditional sense of gaining skills. Its purpose is to intimidate you into subservience and instant obedience to the brass and lifers who want you to betray your class interests. You are supposed to have no time to think independently. You are a cog, not a person. The favorite drill sergeant expression is that if the army wanted you to have a wife, they would have issued you one. You can be courtmartialed for getting a sunburn, based on the regulation against damaging government property. Even supposedly useful training, such as first aid, is carried out in such a way that your obedience to the instructor in every minute detail is primary over the learning of first aid.

Accompanying this general degrading attack, used to demoralize the fighting spirit of the GI, is the effort to channel resentment against other GIs. Competition between platoons, with loser having to do extra details, makes unity difficult even within the same company. High school rivalries seem like proletarian solidarity by comparison. Drill sergeants make cheer leaders look like pikers, as they constantly ask "Who's the best," building a small group mentality.

One of the tactics used by the brass is to try to draw the most rebellious GIs into phony position of responsibility, like platoon or squad leader. These "leaders" often become a target for attack by the other GIs, and the drill sergeants often bear down on them also, driving a rift between the GIs. These "leaders" often become miniature Drill Sergeants for basic training. They later wonder how on earth they were tricked into that kind of position.

For example, in one company, all four platoons had to take 2 miles of punishment running. The platoon leader behind a PLPer's tried to run over stragglers from the platoon ahead, castigating the stragglers for being no-good, weaklings, etc. The platoon leader deliberately tripped the PLPer, who promised that he would pay for that later.

Usually such an incident would be used to incite platoons against each other, develop "unit price," and maybe have a little brawl to cool down the spirits. Instead, however, the PLPer went throughout both his platoon and the other platoon explaining why what the fellow had done was the brass's dirty work, that what was needed was unity among the GIs against the brass and drill sergeants. So when the PLPer called out the platoon leader for a fight, he had almost unanimous backing from the GIs. (He also lost the fight, by the way. But he made the point.)

The small group mentality can be defeated through the development of an off-post, post-wide center. The prerequisites for such a center are continual barracks level struggle.

The barracks level issues include immediate harassment of all kinds, counter-attacks against which can lead to confrontation with the brass. A common tactic the drill sergeants use is to try to intimidate all the soldiers by picking on one or two scapegoats and harassing them half to death as examples to any other "fuck-ups."

In one platoon, the senior drill sergeant made the totally false claim that one of the scapegoats had been encouraging people to go AWOL, and that he would give him extra duty for this. If we let the SDI get away with this, we would all have been more scared. So a PLPer got together with the scapegoat and wrote up a statement saying, "We, the undersigned have not been encouraged to go AWOL by S.H., and we have not heard him encourage anyone to go AWOL." The whole platoon signed it. When the SDI came up to give him extra duty, five of us confronted him with the signed statement (totally illegal—tantamount to mutiny). He was stunned. He backed off, stumbling down the stairs muttering how he hadn't really meant that he would give him extra duty. The fellows gave a cheer at this success. They exclaimed how, if we stuck together, there wasn't anything we couldn't do. Similar actions around a racist insult, more time for chow, sexist attacks on a GI's wife, formed the essential groundwork for building a GI movement. These practical mass activities were complemented by the illegal distribution of Challenge in the barracks, and by sharp ideological confrontations in the propaganda classes.

WHEN THE BRASS TOLD HOW KOREANS were brutal to prisoners of war in the Korean War, a PLPer stood up and corrected him in the question and answer period. When the fairness of the UCMJ was explained by the battalion commander, the PLPer would list the systematic ways the UCMJ is arbitrary, capricious, and designed to put GIs at the mercy of the company commanders. When the XO gave a lecture on drug abuse, the PLPer condemned the army as the real pusher, and received widespread cheers and applause. When the company commander asked for volunteers to debate the seemingly innocuous issue of whether the Revolutionary War of 1776 was justified, the GIs pushed the PLPer to the front to explain why it was justified—and he did, pointing out that rebellion is right, including in Vietnam

against U.S. imperialism, and inside the army, against the brass. In one of the last classes on subversion, in which communists were depicted as sneaky amoral creatures out to screw GIs, the PLPer got up and declared that that's not how communists were, since he was one and he wasn't like that. The commander got so flustered that the PLPer was able to speak for about five minutes on the party's line, while the 200 GIs in the class cheered and laughed at the commander's beet-red face. The company commander ended the class early, declaring the PLPer under arrest!

Although there were errors made in some of the barracks level activity, by and large the two PLers built a broad base of support and respect for communist activity. The basis was laid for us to link up with the local storefront, which we had just found out about. We brought as many of our active duty friends around as possible, although there was considerable turnover given the character of basic training.

The storefront activists were a motley crew, dominated by Philadelphia Resistance. Among themselves there was constant bickering, sleeping around, drug use, and general instability. Politically they argued for GI militancy, and black separatism, while in practice they neither attempted to develop on-post actions nor any fights against racism.

Nevertheless, following the Ft. Hood example, we felt that we could win over those GIs who did come to the counseling center, and that over time even some of the Resistance people might come around.

WE BECAME VERY ACTIVE IN TRANSFORMing their newspaper, Fragging Action, into an organ of struggle. This change made the paper popular among GIs, and, most importantly, well-distributed by GIs. Through the paper, many militant GIs were able to express themselves and their ideas and their struggles to other GIs. Putting out the paper was a center for organization, from the writing and editing of articles, to the pasting up, to the distribution at Port Authority and on post. The weekly meetings at Fragging Action provided good forums for struggling over the program of struggle, although the discussions were frequently dominated by the internal bickering of the Resistance people.

In March, 1972, we organized a major demonstration at the post gates, including a dozen GIs and several hundred civilians. Three of the GIs spoke. The demonstration caused a general panic among the brass, since the base itself had been clandestinely leafleted. Many leaves were canceled, the nearby AF base put all its personnel on restriction, and hundreds of raw trainees were put on riot duty.

Thanks to PL efforts, the storefront activities began to take on an active-duty GI orientation, both in its newspaper and in its actions. Not that Fragging Action ever achieved a predominantly GI character like the FHUF did. The reasons included the constant turnover of basic trainees, insufficient cadre with free time, and weaknesses of the party cadre in consolidating those GIs ready to fight back closer to and into the party. If Fragging Action was ever to advance, it required the development of a core of militant black and white GIs.

As we moved towards this goal, the Resistance people panicked. It had been good for their consciences to come out and counsel soldiers, but the potential fighting organization of GIs and civilians scared them. They quit squabbling over who was sleeping with whom long enough to hold a special meeting to "expel" PL from the storefront organization. The anti-communist slanders were carried out and voted on when no PLPers could attend.

Since most of the active duty GIs who had begun to get involved with Fragging Action had looked to PL as a leading force, they were disgusted by this move, carried out by the Resistance civilians and a couple of token GIs. In response, PLP wrote a letter calling for our "reinstatement," exposing all the lies which led up to the expulsion.

The reasons given for being kicked out were that PLP had done nothing to build the office or the paper, and that even if it had, it had only done so to build itself! On the face of it, a bald contradiction which a four year old could see through.

In our letter, we made some self-critical remarks about some minor sectarian errors, and then proceeded to say:

> We think it would be a mistake and weaken the GI movement and this office if we were forced to leave, especially when these courtmartials, stockade hearings, demonstrations are all coming up. Our main work has been to build Fragging Action, this office, and the GI movement at Dix, concontrating on the fight against racist harassment and the war. In the short time we have been at Dix, and hampered by being stuck in basic training companies, we have helped organize a GI Union meeting of 20 GIs and Airmen; helped build for the February 26 demonstration at McGuire Air Force base; contributed articles for Fragging Action; solicited articles for Fragging Action from other GIs; helped put out and pass out Fragging Action; brought and helped with meetings of GIs on base where it was not possible to get some GIs down to the office; worked on the beginnings of this campaign against the racist stockades; and have helped build for Martie's courtmartial, among other things. In short, we participated and helped build this office among GIs, always stressing the necessity to fight racism in concrete ways and issues.
>
> It is absolutely true that we are in PL and want to see socialism become a reality in the country and the world. When we talk of socialism we mean workers' power... We believe that any gains workers and GIs make through militant struggle will be taken away by the bosses if it is not consolidated by workers' revolution.
>
> Communists have always helped build organizations which fight against the in-

West Germany. Black and Latin GI's march to protest the burning of a KKK cross by racist lifers.

justices of the ruling class . . . and which include people of different political persuasions, as does this office . . . It has been true throughout our history that when these coalition groups have excluded Communists, they have been weakened as effective organizations of the people (e.g., the CIO).

Our expulsion was not reversed because the GIs we worked with had not been won close enough to see the need for developing GI leadership of the storefront; they preferred to tell the Resistance people to go to hell. Which they did, by the way. The next three issues of the paper were non-struggle, poorly distributed, and the final issue was nothing more than a piece on life in North Vietnam—a revisionist, non-struggle, boring paper which might have been useful as toilet paper if it had been distributed significantly.

While the united front lasted, it was a valuable resource in which to build the GI struggle. When it fell apart, the active duty GIs formed the Servicemen's Action Movement, including activists from several different companies at Ft. Dix. SAM participated in several barracks' based struggles, built for two national demonstrations, and plastered Ft. Dix with stickers calling on GIs to join SAM. But then the entire SAM was shipped out to different posts, and the organized GI movement ground to a halt at Ft. Dix.

RED GIs IN GERMANY

The class struggle inside the army in Germany sharpened up in the period covered by this article. Housed in Nazi barracks with the swastika still visible, U.S. soldiers had and have plenty to be angry over. Rotten living conditions, a high degree of racism by the German police and German businesses, and frequent wasteful maneuvers in the field laid the basis for rebellion. GIs coming in from Vietnam brought with them the rebelliousness which characterized that theater.

In some areas, GIs actually took over and held entire posts for periods of hours. Usually they were hit by no reprisals, since the brass feared stirring up even more rebellion. Most of these actions were anti-racist, and led by black GIs. After such an action, the brass would try to transfer the most active GIs to try to divide nascent organizations, as in the case of the Darmstadt 53, who were not prosecuted in the end, but sent all over the world.

When class struggle sharpens up, all of the contradictions intrinsic to capitalism sharpen up. Racial antagonism, egged on by the brass, increased, although inter-GI racist attacks were much more infrequent than brass-GI confrontations, which often involved black GIs and white officers.

> Recently much publicity was given to the burning of a cross, KKK style, at a post here. It seems there was such an organization of racist lifers. But the publicity tried to shift the blame on to white troops in general. When you carefully read the reports in Newsweek, Time, etc., about "racial incidents" in Germany, you almost always find that black GIs, often with white allies, are clashing with predominantly white MPs or NCOs or officers. The magazines make this out to be a racial clash when it's really a class struggle of working class black GIs against the brass and their cops. (Letter from a GI in Germany, **Challenge-Desafio**, Nov. 22, 1970)

Drug use was also widespread, as GIs looked to escape the rotten conditions the Army forced them into. What was lacking here, as elsewhere, was an all-Germany mass multi-racial organization of GIs, led by communists, to fight on the many issues affecting GIs' lives directly.

PLP's work in Germany began with a continuation of the sectarian weaknesses mentioned in other sections. It nevertheless was bold and militant. The work began by 6 GIs marching in the German Mayday demonstration, with a big banner saying "GIs say... Same Enemy, Same Fight, Workers of the World, Unite." A number of other GIs joined the march. Shortly afterwards, the party led a militant defense of a black GI who had defended himself against a lifer, by barricading the barracks from the MPs who wanted to take the GI off to pre-trial confinement. The army transferred the PL member immediately, sabotaging the beginnings of an anti-racist organization at his post.

Our failure to consolidate contacts from these initial struggles, or from our independent party agitation in Berlin and other towns, was an indication of sectarian weakness.

> All except for a couple of guys, most of the people we brought into the group did not stay for long, as we did not offer them a plan for fighting their daily problems. We spent most of our meetings discussing RRIII, which is good, but we needed a plan for reform struggles.
>
> ...In July, 1971, we found out about a group in Heidelberg called "FTA with Price." Because their newspaper had an article about an SWP politico's trip to talk to black GIs and an article about the ASU, we figured that they were trotskyites of some sort. This was intensified by reading an article in the **Militant** that they were working with the German YSA—which we found out later to have been a lie. We immediately assumed them to be enemies. We made some half-hearted plans to go to their coffeehouse, but we never did. It wasn't until over a year later that we found out that they weren't trots at all, and joined with them to form Fight Back.
>
> The main reason I believe that we lost contact with... people is that we had nothing to offer them, beside working directly with the party. Even though they have liked **Challenge,** they were not ready to join a communist group. This had been the failure of the Ft. Dix group. This was compounded by our failure to follow up contacts effectively-when we would sell the paper publicly in Frankfurt, they would be sold at the rate of one per minute. However, we took names of interested GIs rarely. (GI work history, PL German Club leader report)

The need for an all-Germany mass GI organization was apparent. We took the steps to found it in September 1971. The paper of the Germany-wide organization was called **Fight back.** Monthly all-Germany meetings were held to discuss the political line of the paper and to produce it. The paper mushroomed, and the brass panicked, throwing dozens of agents into work against **Fight back,** as can be seen in the current lawsuit. **Fight back** was an organ of struggle, a real organizing tool.

As the paper grew and morale continued to decline, General Davison, chief pig in USAEUR, instituted an "anti-drug" crackdown to attack all GIs who wanted to fight back. Posters were torn down from GIs' rooms in middle-of-the-night Gestapo raids. "Associates of suspected drug users" could be restricted to their company area, and have all personal, non-army possessions confiscated and placed in the supply room. Along with the door to his room. Numerous cases of arbitrary intimidation, aimed at stifling dissent, were reported. There was massive resistance to these attacks, which were doing virtually nothing to stop drug traffic, of course.

Fight back took the attack head on. Simultaneously attacking the use of drugs, and pointing to the government as the real pusher, **and** attacking the government for using phony anti-drug policies as an excuse for political repression of all dissidence, **Fight back** called for massive resistance to Davison's attack:

> GIs in USAREUR have been subject to a new overdose of harassment and repression under the pretext of the Army's "war on drugs." The very idea of the Army conducting a campaign against drug abuse is absurd. The Army itself creates and perpetuates its problem of drug addiction and abuse.
>
> The GI who joins the Army in the belief that he will find fulfillment and a position of responsibility in the service of his country finds himself hopelessly trapped in the insanity of the green machine. He is no more than a cog in their machine....
>
> In this situation the supposed "anti-drug campaign" is only another instrument to further terrorize GIs into blind submission to Army power. The removal of doors, confiscation of posters, black lights, incense sticks and civilian clothes, restriction to base and arbitrary piss tests only worsen the desperation and hopelessness of GIs' situation and therefore make him even more prone to drug addiction.
>
> The only productive approach to the drug problem is to understand the reasons which create it and to change the situation responsible for it. (**Fight back,** p. 10, March, 73)

After two pages of solid examples of specific abusive attacks, including beatings, midnight shakedowns, kicking down of doors, **Fight back** concludes,

> When officers and NCOs can beat EM, make them strip, can deprive them of all rights and privileges, can tell them in fact they have no rights, when they can purposely engage in other dehumanizing tactics, such as armed guard or confinement, restriction, removal of doors and all this with no

charges against the men in question, then some change is badly needed!!!!
FIGHT BACK!!!! p. 3, **Ibid**.

The army's response was to try to destroy **Fight back,** by shipping out all the PLPers and several other activists they knew to be involved in the paper's production. Through legal maneuvers, one of the paper's leaders managed to stay longer in Germany, and the secondary leadership was strong enough to carry on publication and distribution of the paper.

The enormous GI resistance to Davison's war on drugs forced Davison to back down. The mechanism was a Lawyers' Military Defense Committee lawsuit, backed up by a strong GI support group. **Fight back** reports:

> At Butzbach, more than 50 soldiers have joined together to form the Committee for GI Rights. They have agreed to circulate petitions to their congressmen and in all likelihood also to bring a lawsuit in a federal court to enjoin the Army from going ahead with its "program of unjustified oppression." The lawsuit will be coordinated by ... the Lawyers' Military Defense Committee(p. 7, **Ibid.**)

The battle was won, as anxious justices peered over the lawyers' shoulders to the spectre of massive GI rebellion, with an organized core in **Fight back.**

The united front strategy, initiated at Ft. Hood and used to the best effect at Ft. Dix and in Germany, was also applied somewhat less successfully in this period. Nevertheless, several other struggles were launched.

At Aberdeen Proving Ground, barracks level activity by the active duty VVAW chapter there—initiated by a PLer—was able to pull off a couple of actions.

> Army machine operators used their power over production to gain concession from the brass.
>
> Most regular personnel at APG get one afternoon off a week for "Physical Training." Actually this is free time. When a new master sergeant took charge of a machine shop here, he cut out PT time.
>
> The junior enlisted men in the shop got together and decided to "take it easy" on their job. After several weeks they got together again and went in to see the sergeant. He wanted to know what the problem was. The men let him know and they got their "PT" time back. (**Challenge-Desafio,** 9/21/72)

This slowdown tactic spread to several other units at APG through the VVAW chapter.

An effort was made to move to a higher level of struggle, fighting to implement the article 15 campaign (see ahead). By confronting the commander with about a dozen GIs, the CO was forced to agree to a monthly grievance meeting and to give that group a representative on the battalion race-relations council. A key factor in developing this unity was the multi-racial character of the active duty VVAW chapter initiated by the party.

In Washington, D.C., PL helped invigorate a local project, and succeeded in launching several on-post struggles against harassment. The GI alliance provided a center for activist GIs to get together from several local bases, to coordinate activities and to put out a newspaper called **Open Sights.** The D.C. GI Alliance succeeded in several minor struggles, and participated in several demonstrations, including an anti-war demonstration and a regional "Free Billy Smith" demonstration at the Court of Military Appeals in D.C.

In this case, as well as in the major cases, the one weakness which stands out above all the rest was the failure to build the PLP by recruiting GIs into it. Thus, when attacked and transferred, the activity we initiated inevitably waned. Only recruitment from the army itself could resolve this problem in a reliable way.

SHARPENING MASS ACTIVITY: THE BILLY DEAN SMITH CAMPAIGN

Although we had engaged in struggles around specific issues, local grievances, as well as in demonstrations against the war, we needed something more, an issue or a set of issues or a set of concrete reforms to solidify our base. The first of these was the Billy Dean Smith campaign.

ALL CONTRADICTIONS OF MILITARY LIFE came to a head in the case of Billy Dean Smith. GIs had fought mightily against the war—Billy Smith had organized and spoken out against it in Vietnam. He had gone AWOL many times to avoid combat patrols against the NLF. GIs had rebelled against racist lifers and brass—Billy Smith had attacked racism sharply in his company. Billy Smith stood for the militant armed fight against the brass, which black soldiers like himself had taken the lead in initiating. Racism meant that 40-50% of the front lines were blacks, served up as cannon fodder for U.S. imperialism. But this cannon fodder preferred fighting the brass to fighting their Vietnamese brothers and sisters. This is the movement which Billy Smith symbolized.

Just as Davison in Europe tried to intimidate militant GIs through his "war on drugs," the brass as a whole sought to intimidate GI militants throughout the world by lynching Smith for the fragging murders of Smith's commanders.

The military understands the force of example. They use it from the day a recruit enters the service, singling out individuals to use as scapegoats. The frame-up of Billy Dean Smith was no more an accident than Ike's murder of the Polish immigrant worker Pvt. Slovik in World War II. The execution of Smith was to be the grand lesson to GI dissidents—don't fight racism, don't fight the war, don't fight harassment—don't fuck with the green machine. An account of the lynching would have made excellent basic training material for the class on the UCMJ.

Thousands of GIs, veterans, and students saw the crucial significance of this case and the propaganda attached to it. The slogan became, "Free Billy—Free Ourselves." His incarcera-

Ft. Ord, Calif. GI's show solidarity with Pvt. Billy D. Smith as he leaves a preliminary court martial.

tion and trial was in reality a trial for all of us. To defend him was to defend ourselves.

PLP decided that the Billy Smith campaign would be the main mass campaign we would be involved in, always stressing the crucial role of racism in the MVA (in addition, of course, to the barracks-based fightbacks, participation in storefront/coffeehouses, and independent party agitation). Many organizations fell into step, both before and after the PL decision, although the party was the first organization to publicly advocate and carry through nation-wide efforts at organizing to stop the racist frame-up. We organized the activity through our activity in GI organizations, veterans' organizations (VVAW), and SDS.

In every post throughout the world where we had cadre, leaflets, petitions and demonstrations appeared. In every united front from the GI Alliance in D.C., to the Ft. Devens United Front, to the Fight back organization in Germany, to the Ft. Hood United Front, and many others, PLP raised the fight for Smith's life as a life and death matter for all of us. In virtually every case, the united fronts took up the campaign as a priority issue.

Five East Coast GI organizations united for a demonstration in early July, 1972 to demand freedom for Billy Smith. As the D.C. GI Alliance leaflet said:

> You know how the army always tries to harass and scare you and keep you guessing. They hope the guys will get jumpy at each other—blacks against whites, married against single, etc. Then when a man speaks up, they try to silence him, because he might pull the jumpiness together into a big pounce on the brass.
>
> That's Billy Smith. He's a pouncer. He spoke out and organized against his racist CO and the Army's being in Nam. He's being charged with fragging two officers because of this—and the only evidence is a grenade pin which came from a different type of grenade. He's been sitting in pretrial confinement at Fort Ord, California for over a year now.
>
> The army does not believe in justice for Billy Smith. They want to lynch him to provide an example to other militant GIs who won't take the Army lying down.
>
> There's always a fight going on between us GIs and the brass and lifers. Billy Smith is one of us. He's in the slam, framed up. On the other hand, take Lt. Calley—a convicted murderer of Vietnamese people, running around free, a railroad scab before he joined the Army—perfect officer material. We GIs are the Billy Smiths—harassed every day, used to make money for the brass and the bosses—and always intimidated. The brass is doing it 100 times over with Billy Smith. We're always jumped on when we try to fight back. His fight is our fight only bigger . . .his life hangs in the balance. We should support him 100%. (From "Support Billy Smith" leaflet, DC GIA.)

The East Coast activity was initiated by the

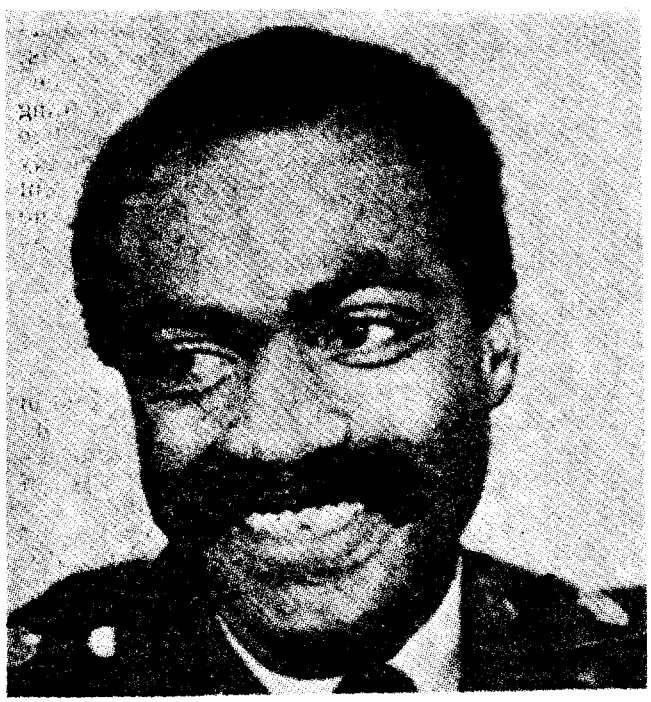
party. Naturally there were many other sources of support for Smith. VVAW fought nationwide on the issue. Many student groups, including SDS, did also. The Billy Dean Smith Defense Committee in California coordinated much of the activity both legal and demonstration-type there. Perhaps as significant was the role played by CAMP News, the central paper of the GI movement. It kept trial developments, analyses, and reports on actions in its front pages.

As a result of these activities, the trial was conducted in an atmosphere of watchfulness and a high level of consciousness. Naval rebellions against racism were much in the minds of the military top dogs during the trial.

On the day of his trial, VVAW and SDS staged a sharp action in Monterey. VVAW held a trial of the army as the trial of Billy Smith began. **Challenge-Desafio** reports:

> ...we had a rally and a spirited march up to the Fort Ord gate, demanding the freeing of Billy Smith. About 300-400 people were on the march, including some people from the mainly black working class and Army community of Beaside, who joined us as we passed by...
>
> At the trial of the Army, there was testimony on all aspects of racism in the military: 17 GIs died of an epidemic of spinal meningitis at Ft. Jackson, S.C., and it "just happened" that they were all Puerto Ricans. A Filipino veteran told how he was consistently used in training classes as an example of a "gook of a slant-eyed Asian." A black WAF veteran told about the combination of racism and sexism—she was pushed for hitting a woman who repeatedly called her nigger, while this woman got off....
>
> Many of the speakers on resistance in military pointed out that these fraggings and killings of officers were often not conscious political acts, but a matter of sheer survival... Oct. 5, 1972, p. 11

VVAW raised the same issues at the Republican Convention.



Billy D. Smith

AS THE KANGAROO TRIAL PROCEEDED, prosecution evidence was shown to the world to be shoddy and trumped up. When the star prosecution witness took the stand, he declared that he was sure that the person who had thrown the frag was **not** Billy Smith! At that point, with the world watching, the Army threw in the towel. It feared the massive rebellion which was threatening had they tried to get a conviction after their efforts to use a GI's drug problem to frame up Smith failed. Commenting on the freeing of Smith, **Challenge-Desafio** reports:

> The Armed Forces feared an increase in militant actions by enlisted men if they gave Billy a heavy sentence. With the current revolts of sailors on the USS Constellation and other ships, this is the last thing that the Brass wants.
>
> These are the reasons Billy Smith was freed, not because of liberalism by the Army or the "compassion" of the lifer officers of the jury...
>
> ...A black man named Alfred Flint is now serving a 30 year sentence in the main Army stockade at Leavenworth, Kansas. He was convicted of killing a major, on evidence equally as worthless as the evidence in Billy Smith's case.
>
> The reason one got acquitted and the other got 30 years is not the skill of their respective lawyers (they both had competent, dedicated civilian lawyers); it had very little to do with the individual attitudes of the officers trying them, virtually all of whom have highly racist attitudes towards militant black GIs. The difference was that Flint was tried in Vietnam with no movement or support to back himself up with while a world-wide movement had developed around the defense of Billy Smith.

The party brought to the fight the political line of fighting racism as a key to the struggles inside the army, and the organization which made possible many militant, spirited demonstrations as well as educational work among tens of thousands of GIs.

LONG-RANGE REFORM—FIGHTING RACISM AND HARASSMENT BY REFORMING THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE

Through the work around the Billy Smith case, the party concluded that a long-range anti-racist focus required a struggle to reform the entire UCMJ. As a reform struggle, such an endeavor allowed for a long term commitment to the reform itself, and it could involve people on many

levels of struggle. The best kind of struggles, although not the only ones, would be against particular racist abuses of the UCMJ. Within those struggles, the structural reform of the UCMJ could best be advanced.

While calling for structural reform in judicial procedures, the reform plan called for a weakening of military's arbitrary kangaroo court power over the GI. It was modeled on a case in Vietnam, where courtmartial boards were made up of genuine peers. Virtually every case which involved charges against a GI by an offended officer was thrown out! Naturally, such a change only came about and was maintained because the military at that post was swept with dissension, mutiny, and demoralization. Only a terrified command would yield this much of its authority. And it would yield it only so long as normal military discipline could not be maintained, or so long as no organized movement emerged demanding it.

Civilian courts are racist and often filled with kangaroos also. Nevertheless there is a facade of justice, due process, and the "technical" assumption of innocence until proven guilty. These supposed rights are generally denied members of the military. The article 15 is non-judicial punishment. It requires virtually no evidence. If the commander wants to discipline a GI for some violation, he simply writes up an article 15, asks the GI to sign it, and can give the GI extra duty, loss of rank, restriction, heavy fines, and a loss of privileges. The GI does have the rights to refuse to sign the article 15. Then he will be courtmartialed, and the penalties are likely to be much harsher, including time in the stockade. And the courtmartial is really not a much better situation. Although there are rules of evidence and so on, the jury is made up of officers, the class enemy. (Because of pressure, courtmartial boards now include up to 1/3 EM—almost always lifers.)

Article 15s and courtmartials form a crucial link in the racist subjugation of black GIs, as can be seen by the overwhelmingly black population of Armed Forces stockades. Naturally, the UCMJ is also a stone around the neck of white GIs.

The clear contradiction between elements of the UCMJ and the federal court system forms both a rallying point for many GIs and a danger of bourgeois co-optation. In his typical wish-washy, non-substantive fashion, McGovern said:

> We should model the military justice system to the greatest extent possible on the Federal court system. Members of the military juries should be selected at random, not by command choice. The summary courtmartial, which does not provide adequate safeguards, should be abolished. All of these measures would represent a fundamental realignment of the system of military justice on the system of civilian justice. They would virtually eliminate the possibility of command influence on the judicial process. ("George McGovern Speaks to Servicemen," campaign lit. '72)

It is crucial for communists in the struggle for UCMJ reform to point to the pitfalls of bourgeois democracy, and win people to a revolutionary perspective. Nevertheless, the UCMJ is the most blatant fashion that the "involuntary servitude" character of the military manifests itself, and it is the key way that racist attacks are carried out in the armed forces.

The campaign began at Ft. Hood with a petition:

> We, the undersigned GIs of ..... demand that Congress completely change Article 15, UCMJ, taking the power to impose punishment out of the hands of the Commanding Officers and putting it into the hands of enlisted people.
>
> We propose that a board be established composed of 3 EM, grades E-1 through E-9, who would be elected every 90 days in company-wide election. That board would decide on all cases that are not decided by commanding officers. The board would hear both sides of a case, allowing the accused to defend himself before making its decision.
>
> Article 15 is now used to intimidate and harass GIs. It violates the Constitution of the United States by denying GIs due process of law. It is used in a racist way against Third World GIs. It gives company commanders absolute power to punish EM under their command who they don't like.
>
> A democratically elected board would change the present system of intimidation and harassment to one of fairness and justice. (Reprinted in CAMP News, 9/72, p. 8)

PLP decided to urge all other projects and organizations to pursue this campaign actively. We also decided to try to modify the petition to exclude E-8 and E-9 as total lackeys of the command structure. We also called for court-martial boards made up only of elected EM, not appointed EM and officers.

While we managed to get thousands of signatures, and initiate specific agitation campaigns, this project was not fully carried out largely because by early 1973 PL was no longer sending cadre into the service, and our forces dwindled as people ETSed. The campaign was extremely well-received among GIs; had we had sufficient forces, this issue probably would have become the central demand of a nation-wide GI movement.

BROADENING OUR MANEUVERABILITY—PLP JOINS LEGAL ORGANIZATIONS

Virtually all of the organizations we worked in were illegal in some way, and certainly not officially recognized army groups. But as the result of multiple rebellions in the army, loss of discipline, the prevalence of mutiny, the brass instituted two new organizations—race relations councils and junior enlisted men's advisory councils. These groups were new, and the brass had little experience with that kind of democratic form. The vague regulations surrounding the councils made it possible for us to use those forms both as vehicles of struggle and forums for our ideas.

THE RACE RELATIONS COUNCILS WERE both post-wide and on the unit level. The post-wide council's main activity was to conduct race relations classes, and deal with any major racial problem on post. In the race relations councils, the brass were vulnerable. The ground-rules were supposed to encourage frank and open discussion (for example, you wore civilian clothes—nevertheless, the brass and lifers stood out like sore thumbs).

There could be no retaliation for what you said in the class. The instructors were junior officers, who had volunteered for the job. They were, in one way or another, vaguely opposed to racism in some abstract kind of way. Their attitudes were modified by a required nationally administered course. At the instructors' course, the brass stressed "identity" and "cultural differences" as what was important, rather than militancy and unity. They used Carmichael's book **Black Power** as the required text.

The stress was for whites to "clean up their own backyard"—and stop being so racist. No talk of united struggle against racism. This suited the white brass and lifers fine, since they weren't about to even clean up their front yard, and had no intention of changing their racist attitudes and practices in the first place. Occasionally an instructor would point out the hypocrisy of the army in holding race relations classes while racist job divisions still existed in the service. This was about as far as the junior officer instructors would go.

But the classes could obviously be turned around from a moral lecture to a fighting discussion. A PLPer at Ft. Belvoir attended the course, and was able to raise dozens of important issues of army racism, from the UCMJ to the need to support rebellion and mutiny in the Naval fleets. Most importantly, the PLPer was able to show how army racism is a threat to all GIs, something which was hotly contested by the instructors.

The hot discussion was good. It could all have been for naught, however, if the discussion hadn't led to practical activity. After all, one of the purposes of these sessions was to get angry GIs to vent their feelings, and be pacified. In this case, however, on the third day three of the GIs in the class circulated a petition supporting the soldiers at Walter Reed in UBAD (United Blacks Against Discrimination) who were facing court-martial for militantly demonstrating against racism in the job allocations there, and a second petition attacking the racist behavior of the local police. The first was sent to UBAD. The second was sent to the post newspaper, with a covering letter. It was published, much to the brass's consternation, and they followed it up by claiming that it wasn't true.

The failure of the two instructors, one black and one white, to sign the petitions exposed their wishy-washy, hypocritical stand on racism when it came down to doing something. Their excuses—"clean up your own backyard first" and "not authorized to do this"-just didn't ring true to the people there. The circulation of unauthorized petitions like this is illegal, and can be considered mutiny. But it was possible to carry it out in the context of the class because the brass were weak there. Out of this activity, 2 GIs got involved in the anti-racist movement at Ft. Belvoir.

The unit level race relations councils were less structured. They were voluntary, so those who volunteered generally wanted to do something about racism. In fact, in HHC 11th Engrs at Ft. Belvoir, the race relations council would carry out its mission by making its minutes exposes of racist lifers. When an aggrieved GI would bring an issue to the council, the council would check out the story, talk to the lifer, and, if warranted, write him up in the minutes. One lifer was transferred as the result of this activity. One second lieutenant, when he heard that he was about to be exposed, pleaded with the EM who chaired the council (an E-5) not to do it to him.

The council let him off the hook, but after that he had to knuckle under to whatever the council told him to do.

Clearly there were weaknesses in the council, but it provided a good forum for combatting racist practices. It was a legal place to develop the struggle. Efforts to move the council to put on official anti-racist programs dealing with current issues, such as psychosurgery, was not approved, but it was possible to conduct ideological struggle around those issues anyway.

The Junior Enlisted Men's Councils were supposed to be a mechanism for the commander to keep his ear to the ground for rumbles among the GIs. They generally failed to meet regularly, and there was often little sentiment to build them since they were only advisory. But those GIs who did volunteer to work on the councils—or were elected in some cases—were interested in improving conditions for GIs, and were well aware of the intractability of the brass. In Germany, the GIs wanted a PLPer to be their elected representative on the council, but he refused, arguing that the councils only built illusions. Later on, another PLPer was elected to the post and was able to use the council for broader anti-brass organizing.

The fact that the army created these loose JEMCs and RRCs was a sign of weakness. They represented a form of concession, although they also represented a simultaneous co-optation effort. It is up to communists to become part of these groups, taking advantage of the brass's weaknesses, exposing their duplicity, push the councils for all their worth in terms of reforms, and raise the party's line openly. Many GIs are simply not prepared to work illegally. By combining the illegal newspapers, demonstrations and confrontations with this legal activity, the party can most effectively broaden its base. Just as we had to fight sectarianism to enter the coffeehouse/storefront aspect of the GI movement, so it was another defeat for sectarianism when we actively entered and tried to build these official army organizations into fighting forces against the brass. An example of how the two forms of struggle can work together was a confrontation with the commander of a company over

U.S. troops are used against the postal worker's strike, March 25, 1970.

the right to wear safety shoes. At the JEMC meeting, a petition signed by virtually the entire motor pool was presented. The commander temporarily backed down, and it was impossible for him to make reprisals without completely destroying the council system, even though the petition was illegal. The presence of many other council members made any such action out of the question.

Without independent party agitation and party-building, of course, such activity is worthless, just as it is worthless to elect a city councilman from the party unless that legal form is seen a way to build the revolutionary movement which can overthrow the whole city council system by violence.

FT. LEWIS—BREAKTHROUGH IN PARTY-BUILDING AND FIGHTING RACISM

The army section had learned through struggle what concretely building united fronts meant, and what it meant to build a multi-racial organization. This work reached a peak at Ft. Lewis, which was the last arena of struggle in the army for PL in the current period.

An active-duty PLer arrived at Ft. Lewis in early 1973. He built an active-duty chapter of VVAW, and worked with the Shelter Half, a GI coffeehouse. Simultaneously he began the unit level struggle which is the guts of any GI movement. This level of struggle proved crucial in building a base for post-wide anti-racist militant struggle.

VVAW grew rapidly. It became a force to be reckoned with by the brass. Realizing that a long range anti-racist fight was central to the growth of the GI movement, VVAW and PLP developed a 7-point plan to smash racism in the army. These points were:

1) No bad discharges
2) No riot control
3) Fight racist UCMJ
4) Fight racist medical care
5) No job discrimination
6) Ally with all other anti-racist groups
7) Build international solidarity.

As VVAW took concrete actions around these points, the brass flipped out.

In April of 1973, the commanding general of Ft. Lewis attacked the VVAW chapter by name in front of 17,000 troops. The general repeated over and over again that the troops should use the chain of command, human relations councils (a good place for us to be also, and win over more GIs to VVAW and PLP!), and that in any event the army was an equal opportunity employer and not at all racist like VVAW claimed.

> The attack was prompted by months of anti-racist activity and the recent struggle in the 864th Engineering Battalion led by members of PLP and VVAW.

In the course of this struggle, some important reforms have been won. A number of GIs (largely minority) have been promised better jobs; various GIs have been given leave previously refused under pressure of point 5. The CO was forced to cancel threatened Article 15 punishment for 15 GIs (about 55% minority) involved in these actions. Some GIs previously refused permission to go to school have been granted permission now, and NCOs will not be allowed in our rooms when we are not there. The struggle was aimed at relieving the super oppression of minority GIs, but the militant leadership of minority GIs and communists has in fact helped the situation for all GIs.

...The brass has emphasized that the one thing they don't want is 'mob scenes' like the confrontation that won these things in the first place... We will not be fooled! We will continue to build VVAW and PLP to expand the battle against racism and eventually to rid ourselves of these boss parasites and their brass flunkeys! (**Challenge-Desafio,** May 3, 1973, p. 10)

It was precisely out of confrontations like this that VVAW won its demands and grew in respect among GIs. Most important of all, however, was that in these struggles the line that racism hurts white GIs as well as blacks was clearly shown.

In the 411th Transportation Company, VVAW sparked another confrontation, this time with a racist named Major Ford. He tried singling out a black GI for special harassment and confinement for trumped up charges. A miniature Billy Smith. Newbold and 15 friends had confronted Ford around a series of grievances. Ford had called the MPs, the equal opportunity officer, and anyone else he could think of to try to stem this anti-racist tide. The brass had been forced to give in on three demands, and had to answer 6 others in 72 hours. As a result of the attention this action received, the post command decided to hide its own racism and investigated the racist behavior of Major Ford! Simultaneously other VVAWers were defeating an effort to railroad an anti-racist white soldier out of the service with a bad discharge.

VVAW UPPED THE ANTE IN THE STRUGGLE by launching a broader struggle against racism in the Madigan Hospital. It began with a mass leafleting campaign **on post.** The MPs were called to arrest the leafletters. But the response of the GI families was tremendous:

...even hustling GIs off to the MP station didn't stop the flow of support as lower ranking MPs gave clenched fist salutes after reading the leaflet. Really incensed by this time, the brass spent the rest of the night trying to coerce the residents of the housing project to give up their leaflets for "evidence." Only three surrendered their leaflets out of over 200 families in the project.

...As the leaflet pointed out, the military plans to cut back already inadequate medical care because of the present budget squeeze. Racism will be used to prepare the way as more and more minorities are forced into the armed forces... Dependents recently have been denied dental care at military facilities. The use of drugs instead of real treatment for nervousness or hypertension, special officer wards, long patient lines, overworked staff, not enough doctors, and an attitude fostered by the brass that GIs and their dependents are always faking are common malpractices.

Racism will take many forms as the brass prepares to cut medical service to release funds for "essential" projects like imperialist weaponry. (**Challenge-Desafio,** 9/6/73, p. 11)

Letting the outrage settle for 3 weeks, the brass finally pressed charges against two of the leafletters, trying to hype up a strong racism and anti-communism:

Since the pressing of charges, the brass has been fanatic in its efforts to stop VVAW and PLP. In Leroy's (a defendent) company, the well known racist and lunatic Major Ford has directed his lackeys to spread out-and-out lies about GIs' legal rights. His subordinates told the company 1) it is illegal to read "that communist paper" being circulated in the company (**Challenge,** of course); 2) it is illegal to go to VVAW meetings or have VVAW leaflets; 3) if you know any members of VVAW or PLP you have to turn them in and 4) it is illegal to associate with communists. These statements are in direct violation of the UCMJ. (**Challenge-Desafio,** 9/20/73, p. 11)

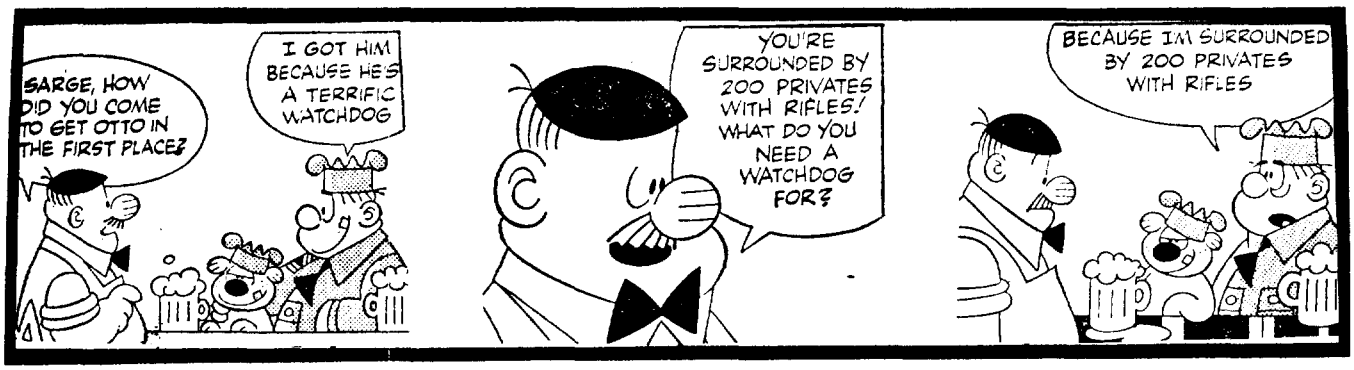
Often the kinds of struggles that VVAW had initiated here end in transfer, repression, and double talk. But because the struggle had been developed in depth, we find in a letter from a GI friendly to PLP:

Since the arrest of Dave Schop and Leroy Bullinger exposed the brass's fears of VVAW, the struggle has sharpened up considerably. The brass are being handed defeats on many fronts.

Madigan Hospital—after being assailed by GIs for months—finally acknowledged that patient lines were indeed too long and found a way to have them shortened. The waiting period, although still too long, has been reduced....

In Leroy's company, the statement made by Major Ford forbidding any form of dissent were exposed as the lies that they are. The day after Leroy filed an article 138 against Major Ford, the pig was forced to apologize to the assembled company for his statements. The militant history of GIs, uniting—black, white, and Latin—to fight the 411th Brass and the potential of future rebellion, led by VVAW and PLP, caused this quick retreat. The following day Major Ford was relieved of command...

These small victories are adding up. GIs are responding to anti-racist and com-


SARGE, HOW DID YOU COME TO GET OTTO IN THE FIRST PLACE?
I GOT HIM BECAUSE HE'S A TERRIFIC WATCHDOG
YOU'RE SURROUNDED BY 200 PRIVATES WITH RIFLES! WHAT DO YOU NEED A WATCHDOG FOR?
BECAUSE I'M SURROUNDED BY 200 PRIVATES WITH RIFLES

munist ideas and will soon send the brass scum back into the sewers that they came from. (**Challenge-Desafio**, 10/4/73, p. 16)

Although the courtmartial became an important aspect of the struggle, it was no longer primary like it had been at Ft. Dix. The organizing continued on many levels. In fact, the courtmartial was used to hold a press conference attacking not just the repression, but the conditions at Madigan Hospital. Furthermore, the same day that the courtmartial began, 50 GIs of all races were signing an illegal petition demanding an end to the 6 AM harassment formations in the PLer's company—and winning.

The packed courtroom, the ongoing struggle, the wide base of support all contributed to a real victory in the courtroom. The PLer got only 2 weeks of confinement (compared to the 6 months PLers had gotten hit with two years earlier at Ft. Dix!) The other man received 2 months, but that included time for an additional AWOL charge.

Many gains for GIs were made during the course of the struggle in the Schop/Bullinger and anti-racist campaign:

> Many GIs who have never been involved in anything boldly stepped forward to fight back and assume leadership.
>
> Scores of GIs from all over the post donated money for the defense of Dave and Leroy. VVAW collected over $200.
>
> Because of their "never say die" attitude, members of the VVAW were granted permission to distribute 500 of the "racist medical care" leaflets on post. Such a decree is a first in the history of Ft. Lewis.
>
> We were able to bring 50 black, white, Native American, and Latin GIs to the trial, validating PLP's line on racism. These united GIs fought back to defend comrades who have been in the forefront of the anti-racist struggle at Ft. Lewis. The leadership, militancy and solidarity showed everyone understood that racism hurts us all. (**Challenge-Desafio**, 12/13/73, p. 14)

The rapid growth of VVAW among active duty GIs, and the militant stand that the chapter took, scared the hell out of the national office of VVAW, controlled by the revisionist Communist Party. Invoking their sacred principle of unity (just confess to believing that the sellout by the NLF leadership is a good thing—you don't actually have to **do** anything to be in VVAW, according to these believers in unity with the bosses—just confess to the Almighty Revisionist that you think sellouts are all right), the national tried to expel the Ft. Lewis chapter because not everyone there agreed with the 8 points of bullshit unity. Once again, PL was faced with anti-communism, and an effort to split us off from the militant center. This time, however, the base of support was strong. At the Washington State VVAW meeting, a letter denouncing the national's efforts was adopted and signed by all the relevant state officers of VVAW. They defended the right of all militant fighters to be in VVAW, including real communists in PLP. As far as they were concerned, the national office could go soak its head in the Volga River.

OUT OF THIS STRUGGLE, PL GREW IN TERMS of GI members, which represented a breakthrough over our previous work which had been woefully lacking in bringing new comrades into the party. Largely because of the growth of the party center inside VVAW, the mass struggle was the sharpest and most successful of any of our previous work, including even the work at Ft. Hood, which had never delivered a decisive blow against racism or recruited people to the party, despite its militancy and mass involvement.

RACISM OVERCOME

Our success in building a genuine multi-racial GI organization of militant GIs, fighting **in their own interest** against racism, stands as a refutation of widespread liberal and revisionist sentiment that black and white cannot unite against racism (or in any struggle against the bosses, for that matter). Despite the good intentions of many people who worked in coffeehouses, who helped build GI organizations, and did some work against the brass and the war, many of them fell prey to one of many forms that racism takes. In general they failed to unite with black GIs, who were, in practice, fighting the brass the hardest. These racist weaknesses were also true, although to a lesser extent, of many PLPers in the service. Nevertheless, the final breakthrough at Ft. Lewis demonstrated that the party, operating in a democratic centralist fashion, can root out even these deeply ingrained prejudices and build multi-racial unity. The lesson applies to students, workers, community organizers, as well as to GIs.

THE LESSON WHICH STANDS OUT STARKLY from the GI work of the party is that, unless the party itself is built in the process of these reforms struggle by the bringing in of fresh blood into the party's ranks, the army can relatively easily turn around struggles, isolate party members, and generally defeat the GI movement through repression, transfers, and discharges. Party recruitment of course requires a serious political and personal relationship with the rank-and-file GIs. The success or failure of recruitment to the party is a large measure of the success or failure in correctly building a base for revolution among the masses.

The effect that the party had on the movement against the brass was tremendous. The transformation of the GI movement at Ft. Hood; the militancy and strength of the struggle at Ft. Dix; the international Germany-wide unity achieved in USAEUR; the agitation and struggle at dozens of other bases, which was not as sharp as some of these actions but which kept GI resistance bubbling; and finally the greatest success, over a year of strong, growing, united anti-racist struggle with multi-racial unity and the growth of the revolutionary party of the working class; all of these activities stand as testimony to the vital necessity of a revolutionary party which can evaluate its practice, carry out its line, and self-critically change as the class struggle requires. Without an organized party apparatus, these struggles certainly would not have progressed as they did. And make no mistake, many of these actions electrified the GI movement, rank-and-file GIs everywhere, and many sections of the civilian population. For the party was able to significantly up the ante in the class struggle in the army.

Despite our small numbers, our impact was great. The objective conditions of class hatred and rebellion were present throughout the armed forces in the period studied. GIs knew they were being used, that they and their families and their class had nothing to gain and a lot to lose in the war. They lacked revolutionary leadership to carry forward that rebelliousness to revolution. But to the extent that PL was able to play a role, it did provide that leadership; thus its impact was great.

The role of coffeehouses, USSF, CAMP News, and other mass phenomena of the GI movement was important and should not be underestimated. But the party's leading role in some of the sharpest struggle was key to many of the advances of the GI resistance. And perhaps even more important than this, many revolutionary cadre were steeled in class struggle, and contributed their experience to the growing understanding of what is required for our party to become in practice the vanguard party which the working class requires in order to make socialist revolution.

GI's support hospital worker's strike.

WHO RULES THE U.S.?

Masters Behind the Scenes: How They Run the Government

Reprinted from PL Magazine February 1970 & January 1973

A PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY PAMPHLET 50¢

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see pages 8 and 9

SHORTER WORK WEEK MOVEMENT GROWS

CHALLENGE

The Revolutionary Communist Newspaper

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY March 13, 1975 - Volume 11, Number 27 **10¢**

Hundreds of Construction Workers Battle Cops

10,000 ROCK NY CITY HALL FOR JOBS

see page 3

A WEEK OF STRUGGLE

LINDEN, N.J., Mar. 3—A caucus called Linden Auto Workers has formed among the laid-off night shift workers of GM's Cadillac-Oldsmobile plant here, to fight for the rights of unemployed members of UAW Local 595. Over 100 workers have joined the caucus, many of them Vietnam veterans and minority and women workers, who have been virtually wiped out when the "temporary" year-long layoff hit the 2,600-worker shift.

MADRID, Spain—The last European fascist regime is on its way out due to the sharpening of the class struggle. (See page 4.)

MODESTO, Calif., Mar. 1—Ten thousand people rallied here in support of the year old strike by the United Farmworkers (UFW) against Gallo Wines. Over 800 Chellenges were sold at the demonstration.

CAMBODIA—The U.S. puppet government of Lon Nol is almost dead. This U.S. puppet does not even have the support of his masters in the U.S. Congress.

NEW YORK CITY, Feb. 27—Ten thousand construction workers here massed around City Hall, shut down the Brooklyn Bridge, and several hundred of them battled the cops in an attempt to smash their way into City Hall, to bring their demand of "we want jobs" into Mayor Beame's office. Beame's response to the construction workers' demand for jobs—the only real answer to their problems—was "a public works program by the government." At $2.00 an hour, Abe? (For more on construction workers demo, see page 3.)

NEW YORK CITY, Mar. 3—Nine hundred deliverers of the Daily News wildcatted here today and stopped circulation of that paper. The drivers, members of the Newspaper and Mail Deliverers' Union, ignored the pleas of their chapel chairman and union president, and ignored the injun tion which ordered them to return to work last night. The strikers are fighting a new work schedule that wuld bring a loss of overtime pay. The Daily News attempted to implement that same schedule last year. The drivers' response—wildcat. The Daily News' reaction to that walkout—postpone the new schedule.